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FOR THE AMERICAN MUSIC LOVER



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edited by PETER HUGH REED

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Preamble On the New Records

Editorial Notes

When RCA Victor issues its 45 r.p.m. records next month, they will come in seven different colors to differentiate seven classifications of music. The selection of characteristic colors resulted from a study by a board of color and design experts headed by John Vassos, nationally known industrial designer. The color assigned to each of the seven categories of music, we are told, represents, in the board's opinion, the psychological and esthetic color connotation of the type of music represented — ruby red for classical music, midnight blue for semi-classical, jet black for popular, lemon drop yellow for children's records, grass green for Western selections, sky blue for international, and cerise for folk music. All labels blend with the translucent hue of the vinyl plastic discs.

How much psychological effect the color of these new discs will have upon the public at large is open to debate. If the inference implied is relative to color and music, the chosen colors are not in harmony with existent theories. As an aid to merchandising, one suspects these color schemes will prove advantageous in sales. The ruby red given to classical music carries on the famous "red seal" color, associated with Victor's finest recordings over a period of a half a century. Comments on the other colors need not be pursued, many of them have had precedents in labeling of shellac records for years. Colored discs are not new. Many were made through the long years, but most proved less satisfactory in the long run. It has been said that colored dyes, mixed into the record dough formulas, caused various chemical reactions. In the early thirties Columbia brought out a blue disc, to correspond to its famous blue label, but the chemical reaction in this specific dough mix resulted

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in surface crackling. Aeolian in the years following World War I had a brown disc, but here again troubles resulted. Whether true or not, we have been told the colored shellac disc was affected by cold and heat changes more than the black shellac record. This proved true in the case of the Columbia in tests that we made. Again, it should be noted, record dough formulas have varied through the years, and it can be assumed that some were superior in quality to others, resulting in better wear. The advent of vinyl plastic in industry has allowed for wide use of color schemes, and it is not surprising to find a leading phonograph company, in its use of the product, taking advantage of bright, eye-attracting colors.

Prices on RCA Victor's new 45 r.p.m. disc have been announced. In the classical music category, the disc will sell for 95c. Albums of two discs will cost \$2.50, of three discs \$3.36, of four discs \$4.30, of five discs \$5.25. The saving over the shellac (78 r.p.m.) sets is practically one third, while the saving over the Deluxe vinylite (78 r.p.m.) sets is slightly better than one half. There would seem to be no just reason to continue the latter sets. Popular, Children's and other categories of recording will be 65c a disc, against the former price of \$1.00. Albums in these latter classifications will be \$1.50 (2 discs) and \$2.30 (3 discs). These prices do not include Federal Excise tax.

The record-playing attachment, for use with existing radio or radio-phonograph, being issued at the same time as the new record will cost \$24.95. A small table model phonograph, equipped with its own amplifier and loudspeaker, will be placed on the market immediately at \$39.95. This latter seems a good unit for popular-music and children's record reproduction.

As window dressing to this new venture in record production, RCA Victor has revamped its two publications—the *RCA Victor Record Review* and *In the Groove*. They are to be combined in a new publication, making its debut this month in a completely new format, a 32-page magazine in color, designed by Erik Nitsche, well known artist and illustrator.

The quality of Victor's new 45 r.p.m. deserves to be discussed at some length. We are indebted to Mr. A. A. Pulley, manager of RCA Victor's Recording Section, for a

most enlightening demonstration at the New York studios of the company on March 10. This demonstration occupied three hours of time.

Hearing the 45 r.p.m. on ordinary, commercial equipment and then on extended range revealed some startling facts over the 78 r.p.m. On the commercial equipment, reproducing not much above 6,500 c.p.s., the 45 is definitely brighter, clearer and more realistic than its 78 counterpart. Heard on extended range equipment, it offers some of the best high-fidelity reproduction available. The reasons for this are understandable. The amount of music on these discs is not taken beyond the point at which compression of modulation begins. As Mr. Pulley states, though three minutes more of music could be easily gotten on this disc, that three minutes would not be free of distortion. The 12-inch lateral-cut disc has always presented a problem in its latter half, for the loss of frequency range begins to be apparent at this point. In orchestral records the loss of highs in the final inch or so of music is noticeable with the result that compensation in intensity is deemed necessary. While this serves to preserve a truer semblance of realism, it does not serve to prevent compression of modulation. Though the 12-inch disc is best reproduced with a long tone arm, there still remains a degree of intermodulation distortion in the inner grooves. To avoid this in record, or transcription, reproduction on the radio, the 16-inch disc was long ago adopted as the ideal medium, using only a fraction of the record space. It was to overcome this condition in commercial recording, RCA informs us, that the 45 r.p.m. disc was developed.

The merits of this record are self-apparent. Whether the individual wishes to change over from 78 to 45 is a personal decision. We advise again that all record buyers endeavor to hear under conditions, as near to their own equipment as is feasible, a comparison between the 78 and the 45. As Victor is placing a small, compact player unit on the market at an equitable price, this assures the record buyer satisfactory performances of these discs. Further, the fact that the player is equipped with a quick-action changer allows for continuous performance, albeit in a less desirous manner

—(Continued on page 220)



HOW TO MOUNT A LOUDSPEAKER

By Robert S. Lanier

A home-built or built-to-order loudspeaker mounting is one of the simplest methods of improving many phonograph systems, or of making sure that a new system gives the best results. Several advantages accrue from construction of a mounting for the speaker, separate from the cabinet which holds the playing equipment.

First, the speaker mounting affects performance in a fundamental way. The average table model simply hasn't room to provide high quality speaker performance, and many of even the largest consoles are not designed with full attention to the best speaker performance.

Second, it is very desirable to have the speaker free for movement to various parts of the room, without changing the position of the playing equipment. Proper position of the speaker is important to best results, and can be determined in any given room only by experiment.

Third, separation of turntable and speaker greatly simplifies the acoustic feedback problem. When the speaker is in the same cabinet as the playing table, heavy bass notes will often shake the pickup arm, producing rumbling noises at great volume, which then become self-perpetuating. Many small units eliminate this problem by greatly reducing bass response. By separating turntable and speaker, full bass can be enjoyed without the danger of feedback.

Fourth, proper listening is usually best attained with the speaker facing directly at the listener. This is arranged most comfortably by having the playing equipment near a chair in the main sitting area, and the speaker facing toward that area from the opposite side of the room.

Finally, construction of a satisfactory speaker mounting is not difficult. The average music lover who is handy with saw and hammer can produce the required equipment, achieving results far out of proportion to the skill and effort expended.

The simplest way of stating the loudspeaker mounting problem is to say that a cone speaker, for best results, must operate from a tight enclosure of sufficient volume. Such an enclosure has a number of functions, but the two principal ones, and the only ones of interest to the home builder, are the separation of front sound wave from back sound wave, and the provision of a large column of enclosed air in back of the speaker.

Separation of front wave from back wave is necessary because the two waves produced by a cone loudspeaker, one from the front and one from the back of the cone, are out of phase, that is, one is pushing when the other pulls, and vice versa. Because the bass is non-directional, — unlike the highs, which tend to move straight away from each face of the speaker — bass waves from front and back of the speaker tend to mix together

and cancel each other. Thus a speaker without a baffle or enclosure of any kind produces very little bass.

The positioning of a column of air against the back of the speaker also strongly affects the bass response. A too-small enclosure tends to strengthen the speaker in the high bass, 100 to 200 cycles, and to reduce response from 100 cycles down. The ear result of this kind of response is a thump, light boomy effect, which is lacking in real lows and gives a distorted reproduction of such bass as does come through.

Strength of Bass

As the column of air in the enclosure is made larger, the point of strongest response moves downward in the scale and becomes less pronounced, which is exactly what we want for clean, strong, *low* bass. That is, this is the effect of a larger *closed* volume of air. An open-backed cabinet, as it is made larger, tends to reinforce and make more exaggerated the "peak" in the mid-high bass, producing more and more "boom" and distortion. The two conditions that attach to the column of air in back of the speaker, then, are (a) it must be big enough; (b) it must be completely closed.

The shape of the enclosure is much less important than its volume. In fact, for the home builder who wants to give his speaker a decent, inexpensive, mounting, any shape will do as long as it is firmly built, has adequate volume, and is completely closed.

This flexibility as to shape, it should be noted, applies only to the "simple box" — the completely closed mounting which is recommended here. Many special mountings have been designed to produce special types of response, usually complementing the characteristics of some particular loud-speaker. In many such mountings the shape is important and must be closely controlled.

One of the most popular of the "special" mountings is the bass reflex, which is available in a number of commercial forms, including the mountings sold with some of the most widely bought speakers. Although the design of a bass reflex cabinet is somewhat more complicated than that of the simple box described in this article, still, reasonably simple directions could be given for building bass reflex cabinets of various sizes.

It is the writer's personal belief, however, that when pickup and amplifier produce a good strong bass, the simple box gives a cleaner, truer bass than the bass reflex. Personal taste must enter here to some extent, and it is only fair to point out that the bass reflex, in moderate sizes, tends to reinforce the mid-bass strongly, at the expense of the very low bass. With some outfits this may produce just the correction that the system needs, and provide a pleasing balance between bass and treble. However, with the better pickups and amplifiers now available, it is the writer's opinion that the bass reflex will most often produce more "boominess" than the musically literate will tolerate. The closed box, on the other hand, other parts of the outfit being the same, produces what at first hearing is a less "bassy" sound, but which actually goes lower down in the bass, with less distortion, than the bass reflex.

Reproduction Equation

The phrase above "other things being equal" is very important and needs emphasis. It should never be forgotten that the final result reaching the ear, is dependent on every component in the system — record, pickup, amplifier, speaker, speaker mounting, and room. Each one of these is of basic importance, in affecting the quality of reproduction. Thus if the speaker mounting produces more or less bass than expected, attention should be given to all other parts of the system, to be sure they are performing as planned, before radical changes are made in the speaker mounting. A further and often overlooked corollary: comparison between two speaker mountings should be made *with exactly the same records, pickup, amplifier, and speaker*. Unless the elements in the complicated equation of sound reproduction are carefully controlled in this way, it is impossible to evaluate the effect of changes in the system.

Here we are discussing, then, simply a tight box, with the speaker mounted in a hole of appropriate size in one face of the box. As stated above, the volume of the box is most important, and the shape is for all practical purposes unimportant, as long as the box is fully enclosed, with a tightly fitting back. This means that mountings

can be constructed in sections of shelving, or in any piece of furniture in which the required enclosed volume can be produced. For a free standing mounting, a very convenient general shape is that shown in the accompanying drawing. The slanting front gives good distribution of sound in the room. The dimensions can be altered to produce the volume required by the speaker.

Another good shape is the upright of triangular section, which can be put in a corner of the room. This is often a most desirable placement. Good distribution of highs and reinforcement of bass are obtained in a corner position.

Recommended enclosure volumes for speakers of various sizes are as follows:

- 8 inch — 3 cubic feet or over
- 10 inch — 4 cubic feet or over
- 12 inch — 6 cubic feet or over
- 15 inch — 8 cubic feet or over

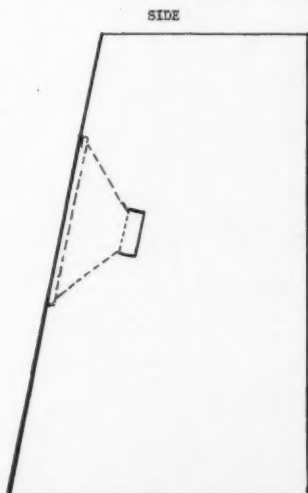
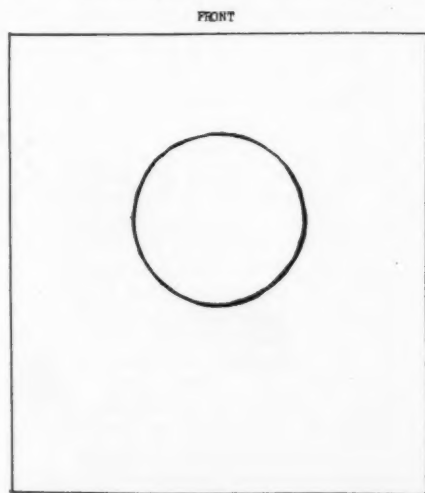
The figures apply to single speakers or to dual ones with tweeter mounted in center of large cone. The sizes can be shaded somewhat, particularly in the case of the larger speakers. A box of eight cubic feet is, of course, a large object to put in the average small living room. The sizes given are designed to provide reasonably smooth responses to about the lowest bass frequencies likely to be reproduced on modern equipment. However, some compromise with this

ideal may be necessary and desirable, in the interests of domestic harmony. Remember that the volumes given are not sharply critical, but merely represent general guides approximately to the volume required.

For those who own their homes, a fine solution can often be made by mounting the speaker on the door of a closet in the living room. Here, of course, ample space is available in back of the door. Any size of speaker sounds well in this type of mounting, if the door is heavy and closes firmly, without any wide cracks to let the back wave leak to the front.

If the box is built, it should be constructed very solidly, with $\frac{3}{4}$ inch or heavier plywood or solid wood, firmly screwed or glued together. The front panel, in which the speaker is mounted, may be of the same wood as the rest of the box. However, slightly better results may be obtained with some speakers if thick celotex or similar material is used for the side in which speaker is mounted. The vibration absorbing quality of the panel prevents it from "talking", that is, from emitting sound waves from its surface which interfere with the sound from the speaker itself.

The back can be arranged for easy removal by fastening it onto cleats with wood screws, using enough screws so that it is held very solidly in place. The finish can, of course, be according to taste. Inside, the box should



be lined throughout with at least 2 inches of absorbing material, such as rock wool, kinsul, ozite, etc. This reduces the tendency for "peaks" to develop in the treble range.

With a tight box of this description, an outfit gives the best results in the bass of which it is capable. It is believed that the phonograph owner who puts his speaker in such a mounting will find the flexibility of placement a great advantage, and will be highly pleased with the sound produced as compared with the usual small or medium sized open backed cabinet, which must do duty not only as speaker mounting but as a playing cabinet as well.



RICHARD STRAUSS

By Neville Cardus

VI

Not much more than a year after the composition of the comfortable bourgeois sentiment of the *Sinfonia Domestica*, Strauss staggered the world of music with *Salome*, and not much more than a year after that, he hurled *Elektra* at us, an eruption as though from a forgotten volcano. Here was a new style of orchestration and vocal writing; magnitude was galvanized out of sluggishness by whips of simulated hate, perversity of passion and brutality. It was, of course, not genuine; nonetheless, the diabolical cleverness of Strauss deceived us for just as long as our ears remained unaccustomed to its clashes of consonant and dissonant harmonies; and unaccustomed also to an orchestra which in *Salome* seemed to hiss and pursue the stage action like a fury crowned with snakes; and so long as we remained unaccustomed to the alternating polyphony

of *Elektra* and its violence of harmony, which at one moment suggested a cancerous spreading of evil throughout the body of music and then in its accumulation of massive weight filled the mind with visions of gruesome maimed archaic limbs. But in both operas the growing cynicism of Strauss comes out in banalities of three-four time: the 'recognition' scene in *Elektra* and the "Say au revoir but not good-bye" cadences of the closing scene of *Salome* could scarcely have passed the self-criticism of an artist wholly serious. Strauss, by these two "shockers", drove the fashionable operatic realism out of the hunt; the puny "Veristi", with their diminutive "Cavs." and "Pags.", could not stand against the gigantic machine of Strauss. Once again, and almost for the last time, Strauss served well the greedy, ruthless and devouring Time Spirit.

The reaction set in at last against neuroticism, sensualism, and as Trigorin says, "all the rest of it". The Straussian genius for characterization and realism could be blended nicely with quaintness, colour, and old receding aromas of the past: the chevalier-esque style of *Don Quixote*, the verve and racket of *Till*, the ardour of *Don Juan* if it could be recaptured; the devoutness of *Morgen* — why here was *Rosenkavalier* waiting to be, so to say, assembled in all its parts. The unction of Sancho Panza could be laid on with a bolder trowel for Ochs. And the old trick of "Once upon a time", infallible in *Till Eulenspiegel* and *Don Quixote*, could be exploited to bring down the curtain of the new comedy for music with the nigger boy trotting here and there looking for the handkerchief to the music of his first entrance into the opera. No wonder that Strauss sometimes was composing the music of *Rosenkavalier* before Hoffmannstahl had written the words or even arranged a scene and incident-sequence. It is a ravishing work, in spite of the restlessness of the orchestra, which can never stop pointing and staring at the characters. It is a mirror that flashes back the action to the stage — not Debussy's mirror that captures and holds all images of the visible world in a glass of enchantment. The Marschallin enters the restaurant in the Third Act, and the orchestra swells to a panniere of tone, so that the rough accents and phrases of Ochs himself change and broaden to graciousness. When

Sophie and Oktavian sit down, after the duet in Act II, and begin polite conversation under the eye of the Duenna, the orchestra at once engages in a perfect head-to-head of swaying interchanging phrases. It is entrancing; and only one of a hundred such felicities in the best of all entertainments presented for the delectation of civilized men and women of all ages who go to opera. And Strauss and Hoffmannstahl allow gentle shadows to fall from time to time upon the variegated scene, not only during the obviously calculated episodes between Oktavian and the Marschallin: a more artful touch is at the height of the brilliant scene of the Marschallin's levée, when she gently chides her hairdresser . . . "You have made me look middle-aged". And the orchestra's flutes flash and ripple with the hairdresser's swiftly-moving fingers. Even an indiscretion of one of the lapdogs shown to the Marschallin by the animal-vendor does not escape the absorbing eye of Strauss's kaleidoscope of orchestration.

Der Rosenkavalier marked the beginning of the end. 'Wo war ich schon einmal' sings Oktavian. The curtain falls to the tinklings of the "Silver Rose" motif, brittle and bitter-sweet. With the curtain and the gesture of the brocaded nigger-boy, Strauss also receded into the past. The Zeitgeist had finished with him; the rebel of yesterday was now the conservative of the present, struggling with out-of-date symbolism and size in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* . . . and, heaven help him, we discovered him to have been all along a diatonic composer. There is much superb music in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, and Strauss still throws his orchestral colour about and stains his tissue of tone with the dyes of Barak. But in *Die Aegyptische Helena* he is without a new idea; the scoring seems bored with its own ingenuity. The opera is a hash of mysticism, pseudo-antique and spectacular, a sort of nightmare suffered after a champagne supper followed by a perusal of Lemprière as a bed-book. *Arabella* audaciously challenged comparisons with *Rosenkavalier*; we cannot but admire the nerve of the seventy-year old Strauss who brought down the curtain on Act I of his latest opera with *Arabella* engaged in a soliloquy. Graf Waldner is half-borther to Ochs, and in the end,

Strauss was once again audacious; for he recalled the closing scene of *Rosenkavalier*, and proved that in 1933 he was still the only composer living who could compose a Strauss opera. *Daphne*, even more than *Arabella*, was a well-remembered work; it is like the supplementary index given away with an encyclopaedia; it is an outline of Strauss for those who have no time to study him in bulk.

Like his own Hero he heard at the decline of his powers ironical echoes of his own works, reminiscences from brave and burgeoning years. It is a commonplace of criticism to say that Strauss was the false dawn of modern music. On the contrary he was a sunset, an afterglow of Liszt and Wagner. Like Kipps, I happen to be fond of sunsets. Strauss was a genius, greater as a musician and an artist than as a man. It may be that, like Spontini, he was a composer for a particular period; it may be that several of his works amongst the symphonic-poems will seem in the eyes of posterity as so many remote lowly-organized unwieldy shapes, pterodactyls of music. But by his mistakes as well as by his conquests, he closed an important chapter in the development of the art; he marked once for all the boundaries of programme-music. Only great men end epochs, as Mr. Newman has said. Strauss sharpened the vocal style of opera; he quickened the vision and pulse of the orchestra. He tintured romanticism with worldliness; he made brutality and realism vibrant and sensuous and attractive. He sinned against the divinity of the art; Wagner ravished music but Strauss raped her. Could any man not born a genius have given us *Till Eulenspiegel*, *Don Quixote*, *Elektra*, *Salome*, and *Rosenkavalier*, not to mention 'Morgen', one of the world's most original and hauntingly lovely songs? Those of us who lived through the years of Strauss's rise to undisputed if brief leadership of music; those of us who experienced the excitement of his orchestra of many tongues and colours; those of us who experienced the first rapture and intoxication of Strauss's magic, will not expect in one and the same lifetime to know the like of it again. No composer since Strauss has swept the world and walked through music with the stride of a Colossus, making dwarfs of his contemporaries.



THROUGH THE RECORD OPERAGLASS

VERDI: *Aida* (Complete Opera); Maria Caniglia (*Aida*), Beniamino Gigli (*Rhadames*), Ebe Stignani (*Amneris*), Gino Bechi (*Amonasro*), Tancredi Pasero (*Ramphis*), Italo Tajo (*The King*), Maria Huder (*Priestess*), Adelio Zagonara (*Messenger*), Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera, conducted by Tullio Serafin. Victor sets DM-1174 and 1175, 10 discs each, price \$13.50 each, or manual price \$14.50 each.

VERDI: *La Forza del Destino* (Complete Opera); Maria Caniglia (*Leonora*), Galliano Masini (*Don Alvaro*), Carlo Tagliabue (*Don Carlo*), Preziosilla (*Ebe Stignani*), Tancredi Pasero (*Padre Guardino*), Saturno Meletti (*Fra Melitone*), and others, with EIAR Chorus and Orchestra, conducted by Gino Marinuzzi. Cetra set 102 two albums — 18 discs, price \$35.00.

MASCAGNI: *Cavalleria Rusticana* (Complete Opera); Lina Bruna (*Santuzza*), Beniamino Gigli (*Turiddu*), Giulietta Simonata (*Mamma Lucia*), Gino Bechi (*Alfio*), Maria Marcucci (*Lola*), Members of La Scala Orchestra and Chorus, conducted by Pietro Mascagni. Victor set DM-1139, 11 discs, price \$14.75, or manual price \$15.75.

BRITTEN: *The Rape of Lucretia* (Selections); Peter Pears (*Male Chorus*), Joan Cross (*Female Chorus*), Norman Lumsden (*Collatinus*), Dennis Dowling (*Junius*),

Frederick Sharp (*Tarquinius*), Nancy Evans (*Lucretia*), Flora Neilson (*Bianca*), Margaret Ritchie (*Lucia*), and Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Reginald Goodall. Victor set DM-1288, 8 discs, price \$11.00, or manual \$12.00.

▲Famous names in the operatic world promise much more than is delivered from the recordings of the three Italian operas. These sets reveal that the level of operatic performances in Italy is no better or worse than we have had in this country for many years. It is surprisingly to find that the tendency among young singers these days, to sing at top voices, prevails even among seasoned Italian artists. The markings of the composers are consistently unheeded with the result that little nuance or intimacy of feeling is projected. Yet, considering the magnitude of the Italian operas — 40 sides in the case of *Aida*, 36 in *La Forza*, and 22 in *Cavalleria* — the overall picture remains a remarkable achievement. *Aida*, aside from personal feelings about the participants, is disappointing in its balance. Undue prominence is given the voices. In this respect, the other two operas fair better.

It is doubtful that owners of the older *Aida* set with Giannini, Pertile, etc. (now two decades old) will wish to transfer their affections to this new issue. The latest *Aida*, Maria Caniglia, is not in a class with Giannini. In recent years, she has acquired a name in Italy as a Verdi soprano and one recognizes her abilities as a dramatic artist, but her singing has little of the sensuous appeal requisite to such roles as *Aida* and *Leonora*. Her inability to sing *pianissimo* on high notes and her consistent tonal stridency offset the fullest enjoyment of her portrayals. Throughout *Aida*, she sings, as one English reviewer (Geoffrey Sharp) has said, "in the manner of a prosperous dowager, entirely shattering Verdi's portrayal of the Ethiopian slave girl". She is much better as *Leonora*; indeed, several sides in the *La Forza* set offer some of best singing on records. Gigli is miscast as *Rhadames*. The role places too great a strain on his vocal powers. He is far better as *Turiddu*. At the half-century mark, the tenor shows his age, for the bloom of that once beautiful voice is no longer consistently apparent. There are only fleeting moments recalling

the Gigli of former times. Stignani, whom one might expect to be an ideal Amneris, turns in an uneven performance. Yet, one suspects, her early scene with Aida might have been more successful had a similar sumptuous voiced singer been cast in the main role. But Stignani is more concerned with vocal display than with the meaning of words. Bechi, as Amonasro, does not suggest the maturity of the role. It should be pointed out in connection with these main participants that all are more interested in fervent dramatic singing than with character delineation. In the pageantry of the Victory Scene in Act II, for example, they fail to depict succinctly the psychological conflicts of the characters. When we come to the music of Act III, memories of phonographic accomplishments of yesteryear intrude. The records made by Rethberg, Lauri-Volpi and DeLuca (Victor 8207, 8160, 8206) are recalled, for they offer a perfection in singing that has never been equaled elsewhere in this music, and certainly not in this performance. The lesser roles are on the whole well handled. Tajo offers a dignified interpretation of the King, and the veteran Pasero is a most proficient High Priest. The chorus and orchestra demonstrate seasoned efficiency. It is somewhat surprising to find Serafin's conducting lacking in true intensity and puissance. One has the feeling that he may have been hampered in keeping temperamental harmony among the singers.

The opera, *La Forza del Destino*, is not in a class with *Aida*. Its story reminds me of the old 10, 20 and 30 cent melodramas that were prevailingly popular in the sticks in my boyhood days. From the technical point of view, the opera is unequal in merit and like the old melodramas is only a collection of episodes or numbers strung together in a patchwork style that precludes true dramatic unity. Its appeal is contingent upon the finest singing, and in the past its success in the opera house has been associated with great names. While Caniglia is more persuasive in her portrayal of Leonora, she does not fully realize the beauty of religious emotion which is associated with the character's music. Masini has youthful fervor and a vocal competence which makes him one of the best Alvaros of our time. His voice is full and rich and appealing. That he lingers over high notes occasionally is a

traditional license that Italian tenors claim and Italian audiences applaud. Tagliabue, as Don Carlos, makes up in sympathetic tone for his lack of dramatic intensity. He is consistently appealing. Stignani, as Preziosilla, is superb, giving vitality and opulence to a role usually poorly portrayed in the opera house. Pasero, as Padre Guardino, and Meletti, as Fra Melitone, are perfectly cast. The late Gino Marinuzzi handles the orchestral forces with telling efficiency. The recording, characteristic of the best from Italian Cetra, offers smooth surfaces in its domestic pressing. This is by far one of the best operatic performances on records emanating from Italy.

The recording of *Cavalleria Rusticana* was accomplished in 1940 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the opera. Although it is somewhat touching to hear the voice of the 73-year old composer making an introductory speech, his claims that the performance is a most vivid one representing him better in the twofold capacity as author and director proves wishful thinking. Povera Mascagni, so soon to pass on, was speaking from the heart not the head. His orchestral direction is sadly uneven, his tempi are frequently dragged, and his cast (which it can be assumed he approved) is by no means the best available in Italy at the time. Rasa, as Santuzza, is rather earthy and shrewish. While it will be admitted that the betrayed Sicilian girl has become a turbulent woman, her mental state is one more of anguish than anger. A younger singer could have handled this role more effectively — Stignani, for example, who is said to give a thrilling portrayal of the part. Undoubtedly Rasa was chosen as she was a close friend of the composer for many years. The choice of Gigli was governed as much by his name as his interpretative powers. Bechi, as one of the most widely publicized younger baritones, came into the picture most naturally. It is a pity that a better Lola was not employed, for Marcucci hardly suggests just reasons for Turiddu's infidelity and Alfio's revenge. Undoubtedly, this is the best version of *Cavalleria Rusticana* on records, but to the indefatigable operagoer it will not measure up to many past memories. One wishes that Gigli with either Muzio or Ponselle had recorded this opera in its entirety twenty years ago. As time goes on, one

realizes that the old operatic recordings (more especially the early electrical ones) are not displaced by new efforts either as performances or as recordings. Victor did remarkable work in this field, and many operatic recordings which the company has cut-out are deserving of reinstatement in its catalogue.

Turning to Britten's chamber opera, *The Rape of Lucretia*, one is confronted with a production which, in aiming to blend several elements of the theater, emerges as a hybrid. It is neither true opera nor true drama, but a high-flown, intellectualized production which in the annals of opera proves a strange phenomenon. In the theater, I found *The Rape of Lucretia* with its charming sets and personalities often fascinating to the eye. To the ear, it was less intriguing, being elusive and sketchy in both its drama and its music. From the records, it proves more elusive and sketchy as the score is not recorded in its entirety. Those who know and admire the composer's opera, *Peter Grimes*, will find this strange successor a more intimate and sophisticated pursuit, burdened by intellectuality but not by profundity. The subject is the classic legend of the chaste Lucretia, ravished by Tarquinius the tyrant of Rome. What under ordinary circumstances might have been a private affair, precipitated a revolt which led to the expulsion of the entire Tarquinius family (a

dubious bunch at best). This legend, one of the oldest dating back 500 years before Christ, has fascinated authors from Livy to Shakespeare. Ronald Duncan, who wrote the libretto for this opera, unlike his predecessors concerns himself with the individuality of the characters and the entire problem of morals. This prompts him to intermix Christian ethics with the old tale. The style of his poetic drama is a blend of old and new — with male and female narrators commenting and enlarging upon the dramatic action.

Much of Duncan's poetic drama is burdened with verbosity to which music is the generally accepted operatic sense could not be realized. Britten chose to make this opera an intimate affair — his orchestra contains only a dozen players, his characters are six in number — three men and three women, with a single tenor and soprano added as the Male and Female Chorus. After several hearings of the records, with the use of score, though I find Britten's imagination and originality commanding of respect, I do not find the work of great interest. His music varies in quality — sometimes it is no more than background music, again there are moments of genuine vigor and true beauty. Tarquinius' ride to Rome, an interlude sung by the Male Chorus, is dramatic writing of marked vitality. The scene in Lucretia's house has the charm of feminine sweetness with a most attractive duet in which Lucretia and her nurse, Bianca, arrange flowers.

The recording, made under the auspices of the British Council and the supervision of the composer, is on the whole well realized though there are a few poor balances, notably on side 13. The performance is generally excellent with some slight deviations from pitch from several principals and the Female Chorus. Peter Pears as the Male Chorus, does the best singing throughout and Nancy Evans, as Lucretia, proves consistently appealing. Only Norman Lumsden, as Lucretia's husband, Collatinus, disappoints with his tonal unsteadiness.

Listener reaction to this opera cannot, in my estimation, be predicted. Some will undeniably find it irresistible. To the true music lover, it cannot fail to incite curiosity, but whether it will sustain interest is a moot question.

—P.H.R.

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RECORD NOTES AND REVIEWS



BEETHOVEN: *Egmont Overture, Op. 84;* The Philharmonia Orchestra, conducted by Alceo Galliera. Columbia disc 72724-D, price \$1.25.

▲ This recording, made in 1946, is somewhat coarse-grained in comparison to the recent Koussevitzky disc. Koussevitzky's performance of this music is unquestionably the most polished on records, clear in every detail but less telling in drive and dramatic emphasis than the present one. The young Italian conductor, Galliera, penetrates to the core Beethoven's dramatic intentions and in the final pages handles the joyful ebullition with marked power. Where subtlety is indicated, the playing achieves it nicely, though some of the solo passages lack the finish found in the Boston Symphony version.

BOCCHERINI (arr. Lanterlach): *Quintet in C major;* String Orchestra, conducted by Carlo Zecchi. Cetra set 19, two discs, price \$6.24.

▲ An arrangement of one of Boccherini's String Quintets for full orchestra of strings proves to be a worthy venture, for the freedom and spontaneity of the composer's ideas are more richly served and presented. Moreover, the alert, sensitive conducting of Zecchi serves the music advantageously. There is in this work a goodly share of that "happy proportion of invention and ingenuity" which is characteristic of Boccherini's music. Its three movements make a most pleasantly diverting orchestral suite. —P.H.R.

BRAHMS: *Eight Hungarian Dances: No. 5 in F sharp minor; No. 7 in A major; No. 12 in D minor; No. 13 in D major; No. 6 in D flat major; No. 21 in E minor; No. 19 in B minor; No. 1 in G minor;* Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Fritz

Reiner. Columbia album MX-309, two discs, price \$3.50.

▲Columbia is to be congratulated for collecting eight of the best Brahms' arrangements of Hungarian folk tunes into one convenient album, and also for engaging Fritz Reiner and the admirable Pittsburghers to romp through this charming music. The first, fifth and sixth generally receive the most tortured, the most distorted treatment imaginable from "potted-palm" ensembles and radio conductors, who seek to underline the gypsy character of the melodies by outrageous fluctuations of tempi. It is a pleasurable task to report that Reiner does not indulge in the traditional "artistic" maudering (to which other well-known symphonic conductors have also succumbed). He takes the dances at a fast, gay clip, so refreshing the scores that the familiar ones become practically new pieces.

Of the eight listed here, with the exception of the three mentioned above, none is too well-known, and twelve and thirteen are heard on records for the first time. Brahms himself orchestrated only number one, Dvorak numbers nineteen and twenty-one. Concerning the remainder I have no definite information. It is rather too bad that all the dances, originally for piano four-hands, were not orchestrated either by Brahms or Dvorak, although, as a matter of fact, the unknown arrangers have not performed their tasks badly. To further complicate matters, the dances are listed by the original keys of the piano duets; actually, the orchestral version of the fifth is in G minor, that of the sixth in D major. —A.W.P.

GRIFFES: *The White Peacock*, Opus 7, No. 1; Philharmonic-Symphony of N.Y., conducted by Leopold Stokowski. Columbia disc 19012-D, price \$1.25.

▲Music teacher at a boys' school near New York, Charles Tomlinson Griffes (1884-1920) died at the age of 36, before he had reached maturity as a composer. The few works he left showed great promise. There was every indication that Griffes, who was also talented in painting and etching, might have become a leading figure in American music. *The White Peacock* is the first section of a piano suite entitled *Roman Sketches*, which was based on the poems of William Sharp. It

was later orchestrated for the dancer Adolf Bohm, who used it with a scenario of his own devising in a theatre prologue for a film.

The score has a certain amount of oriental coloring, reminiscent of Griffes' excellent tone poem, *The Pleasure Dome of Kubla Khan* (Victor 7957, discontinued), the descending chromatic theme giving an exotic effect that is quite distinctive (and was very advanced for American composition in 1916). It is too bad that the mood of the piece is broken, as it was in the Barlow — CBS Symphony (Columbia 17140-D) version, by the necessity of turning over the 10-inch disc. This annoying interruption was avoided in the Hanson — Rochester reading (Victor 15659), which was squeezed on one side of a 12-inch record. Stokowski, of course, is always Stokowski. In his hands Griffes' peacock is a seductive old bird, a bit tired of the humdrum of every-day life, but still able to spread a mean tail if a good-looking hen should come around.

J. STRAUSS: *Roses from the South*, Opus 388; Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Fritz Reiner. Columbia disc 12941-D, price \$1.25.

▲Reiner, the Hungarian precisionist, attacks the sentimentalities of Old Vienna with athletic intensity and an abundance of enthusiasm. His alert, well-trained orchestra sounds well, is brightly recorded. For my taste, however, they are too healthy sounding, too vitamin-stuffed, conjuring up a picture of carrot-juice cocktails and rare roast beef, rather than the whipped cream and coffee cake that used to be languorously consumed in the Strauss's home town. My favorite record of this waltz is by Bruno Walter and the Berlin Philharmonic (Columbia 69651-D). Judiciously paced in a relaxed, thoughtful manner, it evokes the *Gemuetlichkeit* and genial well-being of the good old days. —A.W.P.

STRAUSS: *Intermezzo* — *Entr'acte*, and *Minuet of Lully*; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. Victor disc 12-0735, price \$1.25.

▲Of Richard Strauss' opera, *Intermezzo* (1925), I profess to know little. In none of stories of opera (European or American) in my library is *Intermezzo* represented. Eric Blom tells us that it contained nothing new

"apart from the transparency of its texture and endeavor to revert to a 'bel canto' style of singing in order to focus the music primarily on the stage". The "bel canto" quality of melodic writing is pursued in this entr'acte which tends toward a lust treatment of polyphonic lines. Its rich scoring is expressively exploited and carefully outlined by Sir Thomas. The added piece, to fill out the recording, is from Strauss' *Buerger als Edelmann*. Excellent recording. —P.H.R.

Instruments

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata No. 5 in F major, Op. 24 (Spring)*; Jascha Heifetz (violin) and Emanuel Bay (piano). Victor set DM-1283, two discs, price \$3.50 (manual set \$4.50).

▲Inasmuch as Mr. Heifetz has previously recorded the first three sonatas of Beethoven (*Op. 12*), one wonders if he intends to record all ten. If he does, it can be assumed that the fourth in *A minor, Op. 23*, which he skips, will come later. Though it is true the *A minor* does not measure up to this work, it hardly deserves its neglect. Surely its delightfully frolicsome *Andante scherzo*, which may have given Brahms the idea for the combined slow movement and scherzo in his *Op. 100*, must hold some fascination for a violinist. Too, its finale has a drive which we do not encounter until we reach the famous *Kreutzer*. The popularity of this opus is understandable, for assuredly Beethoven was in a happy frame of mind when he wrote the music, which is generally bright and gay. Though the composer was not responsible for its nickname, it is not inappropriate. "If one thinks of Orpheus who made a 'lasting spring'," says Marion Scott in her book on the composer, "then this sobriquet is not far wrong."

There is admirable artistic equanimity and tonal loveliness in Heifetz's performance. By omitting the repeat in the first movement and taking the *Adagio molto espressivo* at a somewhat faster pace than most, he manages to get the work onto two discs. This does not make for the most ideal breaks, and there is far less of the poetic sublimity

which is to be found in the Goldberg and Kraus performance of the slow movement. Of the many recordings of this music, that of the latter remains my favorite, despite the fact that Heifetz's stylistic refinement and the proficient playing of Mr. Bay incite critical approbation. The recording does justice to both artists, providing an equitable balance between the violin and the piano. —P.H.R.

MASTER OF THE DOUBLE BASS: *Andante from Concerto in F mi., Op. 3* (Koussevitzky); *Valse miniature* (Koussevitzky); *Chanson Triste* (Koussevitzky); *Wiegenlied* (Laska); *Sonata — Largo* (Eccles); Serge Koussevitzky (Double Bass) and Pierre L. Schutz (piano). Three vinylite discs in album, price \$10.00. Available from Boston Symphony Orchestra, Symphony Hall, Boston, Mass.

▲Koussevitzky, a famous virtuoso on the Double Bass in the early years of his career, made these recordings twenty years ago. They make it apparent that the now noted conductor handled a bulky instrument with considerable skill, producing a tonal quality that was consistently ingratiating. None of the selections aims for pretentiousness nor profundity, but all serve the player advantageously. As Koussevitzky is retiring at the end of this season, this album is a personal memento which one feels sure many of his admirers will want. The proceeds of the album's sale go to the Serge Koussevitzky Anniversary Fund for the Boston Orchestra. —J.N.

SCHUBERT: *Introduction, Theme and Variations in B flat, Opus 82, No. 2*; SCHUMANN: *Fantasiestueck No. 1, Opus 73*; FAURE: *Elégie, Opus 24*; Gregor Piatigorsky (cello) with Ralph Berkowitz (piano). Columbia album MM-808, three discs, price \$4.75.

▲Of the three pieces that make up this album, only the Fauré was originally set for cello and piano. The Schubert was a piano duet; the Schumann was written for clarinet and piano, and, as was the custom in those supposedly non-commercial days, an alternate part was provided for a stringed instrument — in this case the cello, so that the publisher would have a wider market for his wares. Incidentally, the work is incor-

rectly titled *Fantasiestuecke* on the records and in the album notes. There is only one piece, the first of three, included here.

The Fauré *Elégie* I have always found sincerely moving, beautifully sad, in a restrained, well-bred manner. The record, now discontinued, by Jean Bedetti and the Boston Symphony (Victor disc 14577) was very fine, the orchestral version capturing more of the intended mood than the piano original. As Bedetti, for many years solo cellist of the Boston orchestra, retired at the end of the 1948 season, it seems a shame that this admirable performance has been cut out of the catalog.

The Schubert and Schumann selections are rather inconsequential stuff, pleasant enough for casual hearing, not representative of their author's better moments. Piatigorsky plays them well, but not so as to convince one he believes in their intrinsic merit. The cellist's tone has been faithfully captured; the balance between performers unfortunately is to the disadvantage of Berkowitz. To hear Piatigorsky at his best, I suggest his performance of *Don Quixote* with the Pittsburgh Symphony (Col. album M-506). The Strauss music is ideally suited to his temperament. His impersonation of the fairy tale Don is a masterpiece of theatrical wizardry. —A.W.P.



CHOPIN: *Etudes in E major, F major and G flat major* (Op. 10, No. 3; Op. 25, No. 3; and Op. 10, No. 5); played by Byron Janis (piano). Victor disc 12-0431, price \$1.25.

▲ This is more of a test of Janis's ability than the Bach-Liszt *Prelude and Fugue in A minor*, his only previous contribution to the catalogue. The performances of these three etudes can be described as steady, technically excellent, and objective in approach. Janis is a product of our time, and a very young one. With his accurate fingers, and the natural good taste here displayed, he has interesting potentialities.

The *E major Etude*, the most popular of the twenty-seven, is neatly played. What edition does Janis use? In the middle section

there is variant from standard texts. An agreeable restraint marks the *F major* and *G flat (Black Key) Etudes*. The young man does not find it necessary to bang, and he controls the notes in the difficult *F major* in a way that many of his elders will envy, while he beautifully turns the closing octaves of the *Black Key*. As yet Janis does not have any particular notions about the music he plays, which results in rather depersonalized interpretations. There are no lapses in taste, though, and fortunately no false demonstration of temperament. The recording is at a rather low level but faithful enough.

CHOPIN: *Nine Mazurkas*; played by Maryla Jonas (piano). Columbia set MM-810, three discs, price \$4.75 or L.P. disc ML-2036, price \$3.85.

▲ The nine mazurkas selected by Miss Jonas are as follows: No. 48 in F (Op. 68, No. 3); Nos. 27 in E minor and 29 in A flat (Op. 41, Nos. 2 and 4); No. 50 in A minor (posth.); Nos. 21 in C sharp minor and 18 in C minor (Op. 30, Nos. 4 and 1); No. 16 in A flat (Op. 24, No. 3); No. 35 in C minor (Op. 56, No. 3) and the post-humous one in G (which does not appear in any standard edition). Studying this list, one can see that it is far from a representative collection. Only two of the better ones — Nos. 21 and 35 — are present, while several are decidedly second-rate Chopin. Surely something could have been substituted for No. 50 or the posthumous one in G.

It is my impression, based on several of the pianist's recitals and her previous recordings, that Miss Jonas picks music not for the music's sake but for her fingers'. She is basically a miniaturist with none too strong a technique. Certain things she does remarkably well, others give her difficulty. Both the good and bad aspects of her playing are shown here — the taste and feeling for the idiom, also the occasional mannerisms and preciosity that sometimes enters her playing. Fortunately, the two finest mazurkas are well played, though there is a reservation in each. Op. 56, No. 3 has a cut that breaks up its continuity, and in Op. 30, No. 4, she often drops the thirds in the little arpeggiated runs that grace the melody. The latter may sound picayune, but those thirds are an important bit of added color.

There is no point examining Miss Jonas' work mazurka by mazurka. One finds much to admire, and the exquisite moments are what remain in the mind, not the mannered ones. Her work, essentially feminine and delicate, is in sharp contrast to the masculinity of Rubinstein's playing in the complete three-volume set. Rubinstein's probably is superior, but that should not deter anybody from enjoying the better aspects of Miss Jonas' playing. The recording is adequate, but not much more. Recorded on a low level, with suggestions of a few helps from the engineers, the surface noise is enhanced, which detracts from the many pianissimo effects. The LP version sounds best.

COPLAND: *Piano Sonata* (5 sides); BERNSTEIN: *For Aaron Copland*; *For My Sister, Shirley*; *In Memoriam: Alfred Eisner* (from *Seven Anniversaries*); played by Leonard Bernstein (piano). Victor set DM-1278, three discs, price \$4.75.

▲The Copland *Sonata*, which dates from 1939-1941, is a piece far removed from the conscious (and self-conscious) examples of Copland's Americana (such as *Rodeo* or *Appalachian Spring*). It is absolute music; and while Copland himself has suggested that it is romantic at basis, most people will find it abstract, with about the same relation to a Beethoven sonata as a Kandinsky non-objective to a Constable landscape. Undoubtedly it is music of our time — a summary that can mean much or little. On first hearing it could not be termed ingratiating music. Further acquaintance should reveal its inner tension, its development of jagged melodic lines, its compact organization. At best, though, it is music to admire rather than cherish. There is too much of the 1920's in it: too much of the advanced "modernism" that was undoubtedly sincere in this instance, but which results in a work that is too much a symbol of the time to endure.

Bernstein, who seemingly was touched at birth by all the musical good fairies, gives an entirely convincing performance. As a pianist he nonchalantly takes care of the technical difficulties (and there are many); as a musician he is able to color the sonata with considerable native force. His playing is clear and incisive, yet more romantically conceived than the work of Leo Smit, who

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recorded the same piece for Concert Hall Society in 1945. As for Bernstein's own *Anniversaries*, three of which occupy the last disc, they are presumably played with authority. Musically they mean little to this listener: there is an abundance of the *à la mode* modernism, plenty of cleverness, and very little inner appeal.

KABALEVSKY: *Sonata No. 3 (Op. 46)*; played by Vladimir Horowitz (piano). Victor set DM-1282, two discs, price \$3.50.

MOZART: *Sonata in F (K. 332)*; **BACH-BUSONI:** *Nun Komm', der Heiden Heilend*; played by Vladimir Horowitz. Victor set DM-1284, two discs, price \$3.50.

▲Although Victor needed a new recording of the Mozart K. 332, it is from one aspect unfortunate that Horowitz selected it. The piece is no stranger to records (the Casadesu version still is in the Columbia catalogue), while many of the nineteen Mozart sonatas have never enjoyed a domestic recording. Nor can Horowitz be described as an ideal Mozart player. No matter how he curbs himself, the style is not natural to him. One is ever conscious of the sonorities of the modern concert grand; and one feels that the result is affected despite the careful planning. As piano playing, of course, the work is impeccable, save for a touch too chiseled, not singing enough.

No reservations apply to the Bach-Busoni chorale-prelude, or to the Kabalevsky sonata. Horowitz is fond of the latter work and has played it in concert. This is a first American recording, and it reveals a specimen of the modern Russian school, with the opening of the slow movement only too obviously patterned after the slow movement of Prokofiev's Seventh Piano Sonata. It is competently written music, but music that is emotionally limited and mediocre in originality. Much pianistic excitement is generated, though, and Horowitz is a perfect conductor. He plays music like this inimitably — with force, mighty volumes of tone, and the steely, detached fingering necessary. Yet he is never really percussive, and in the last movement he builds up the undistinguished material to a point where it gives a momentary illusion of grandeur. In both cases the recording is excellent, as Horowitz recordings generally are.

—H.C.S.

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BACH: *Arias, Vol. 2: Cantata 97 — Ihm hab' ich mich ergeben; Cantata 66 — Ich fürchte zwar; Mass in A — Qui tollis peccata mundi; Cantata 42 — Jesus ist ein Schild der Seinen; Bach Aria Group, conducted by William H. Scheide. Vox set 654, three 10-inch discs, \$4.75.*

▲ Such a set as this is bound to arouse some mixed feelings among Bach enthusiasts. Mr. Scheide's group is devoting itself to the study and performance of the infinite number and variety of arias in the cantatas and other sacred works of the master. To be sure, performances of individual arias are not so uncommon either in the concert hall or on records, but the tendency has been for singers to repeat a few of the better known of them, and to engage whatever instrumentalists were needed for the *obbligati* on a purely commercial basis with the minimum of rehearsal. The intentions, therefore, have been often better than the results, and it is perhaps not too much to say that a Bach aria unsung is preferable to one done badly. Now Mr. Scheide has made it possible for the artists he has chosen to rehearse to their heart's content, and he has eliminated any possible excuse for shoddiness in performance. As his singers have been chosen for musicianship as well as for voice, it is not surprising that the group maintains an unusually high level of competence and ensemble.

But now for the reservations. It does seem a shame to go so far as these artists have done and not to present complete cantatas. Surely, since Bach conceived these works as entities and for the purpose of presenting a message in his music, it must be obvious that each individual aria has a greater meaning in its original context than when taken by itself. True, many of the cantatas require a full chorus, but there are plenty that do not. My other objection is concerned with the actual performances, which after all the intensive study are more notable for technical proficiency than for understanding of the texts. Diction and word-projection, it seems, are not among the major considerations. Not that the singers are really bad

in this respect — they are simply not strikingly good.

Jean Carlton sings the first aria well, and the *Qui tollis* somewhat less so, largely because the Latin text is even less pointed than the German in her performances. Norman Farrow does a spirited job of *Jesus ist ein Schild der Seinen*, but Margaret Tobias and Robert Harmon seem to get seriously involved in the complexities of their duet, *Ich fürchte zwar*. This is the hardest kind of Bach to put over convincingly, for the rhythm is apt to become choppy, and the whole thing to sound like work. The key, I feel sure, lies in the words, for they should dictate the flow of the music.

On the whole the reproduction seems to me rather better than that of the first album, released some months ago. There is, however, occasional distortion in the voices, especially in the first half of the duet. The balance could do with a little more bass, and the piano continuo (to which purists are bound to object on principle if it is playing at all) is hardly noticeable. —P.L.M.

BLESS THIS HOUSE: *Bless This House* (Taylor-Brahe); *My Treasure* (Barr-Trevalsa); *Ave Maria* (Schubert); *Gift of God* (Gallagher); *The Palms* (Faure); *Paras Angelicus* (Franck); *Children's Prayer* (Thayer); Christopher Lynch (tenor) with organ accompaniment by Warner Bass. Columbia set MM-813, three discs, price \$4.75.

▲ Lynch, in my estimation, does not carry on the tradition of his mentor, John McCormack. The late Irish tenor was never guilty of the stylistic excesses of this young singer. The selections in this album are so obviously chosen for popular appeal that comments on them would be superfluous in this magazine. Suffice it to say the tenor is in good voice and the recording is satisfactory. The organ seems to me a needlessly lugubrious background to many of the songs.

—J.N.

DONIZETTI: *Don Pasquale — Recit and Aria, So anch'io la virtù magica*; and MOZART: *Le Nozze di Figaro — Recit. and Aria — Giunse alfin il momento*; Licia Albanese (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra D. Marzolla dn Jean Paul Morel. Victor disc 12-0733, price \$1.25.

▲One senses the work of a gifted actress in these renditions, for Mme. Albanese endows both Norina and Susanna with very definite personalities. While she sings the *Don Pasquale* aria expressively, one is reminded at times that the role is not usually associated with so dramatic a voice. The essentially coloratura passages are competently sung, though lacking in buoyance. In the Mozart air, the singer handles the scene with consistent charm and ingratiating tone. This is assuredly one of Albanese's best contributions to records, showing her marked gifts as singer and stylist. The recording is extremely lifelike, perhaps lacking in that essential intimacy which is associated with Mozart. Some of the singer's sibilants are too strongly emphasized, something I have never noticed in hearing her in person.

—J.N.

GREGORIAN CHANT: *Missa "Cogitationes"*; The Benedictine Monks of St. Benoit-du-Lac. Album III, four discs, price \$7.00.

▲In this album, the communicative singing of the Monks of St. Benoit-du-Lac is heard in a Gregorian Mass honoring the Sacred Heart. The choice of this service as a recording was occasioned by the pressing appeal made last year by the Rev. Father Mateo Crawley, the Apostle who has exalted the cult of the Sacred Heart throughout the world. That dignitary requested that the Feast of the Sacred Heart, which, in 1948, occurred on Friday, June 4th, should be fittingly solemnized by the entire church. "Wishing to be of one mind with those who responded to that appeal," says the annotator of the notes, "the monks of St. Benoit-du-Lac offered these records, that they too might take part in the diffusion of the cult due to the Sacred Heart of Our Lord."

The present Mass was composed in 1929, upon the initiative of Pope Pius XI, who —

we are told — "even brought his personal collaboration to the work". Two compositions by Palestrina are added to this performance of the Mass: the motet *Pars Mea*, heard after the opening *Introit*, and the Hymn *Jesu Rex Admirabilis*, heard after the *Gloria in Excelsis*. The annotator tells us that though of a different disposition, these continue the same spirit and prayer of the Mass. They also serve to vary the character of the Mass, which is consistently an inner exaltation of spirit lacking in the vigor and physical power of the polyphonic writers from Palestrina's time onward. Moreover, these polyphonic works permit us to realize the extent of fine training the monks of St. Benoit-du-Lac have had under the astute direction of Dom Georges Mercure. Having encountered this aspect of the monk's choir, I would be inclined to urge, nay request, that Dom Mercure give us an album of polyphonic music. The recording of this set, made in the Chapel at St. Benoit-du-Lac, is excellent and the surfaces of the records are good. To those appreciative of a true contact with religious source, this beautifully sung mass provides more than an aural illusion of tuning-in on a famous religious group. Indeed, the devotional character of the music and quality of the singing may well serve to divorce beneficially many listeners from our mundane world of many complexities.

—P.H.R.

HAWTHORNE: *Whispering Hope*; and **MONK:** *Abide with Me*; Eleanor Steber (soprano) and Margaret Harshaw (contralto) with Russ Case and his orchestra. Victor 10-inch disc, 10-1463, price \$1.00.

▲Alma Gluck and Louise Homer set a precedent for this disc. If these young singers do not retard memories of their predecessors, they need not worry, with modern recording technique in their favor.

MILHAUD:—"L'homme et son desir." (2-12" in album.) Orchestra of the Paris Conservatory Concerts Society. Conductor:— Roger Desormiere. Recorded under Darius Milhaud's personal supervision. Limited edition available shortly in the U. S. A. only through

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LEHAR: *The Merry Widow* — *Waltz and Vilia*; *Eva—Love Is a Pilgrim*; *The Count of Luxembourg* — *Say Not Love Is a Dream*; *The Rogue Song* — *The White Dove* and *Are You Going to Dance?*; Eileen Farrell (soprano) and Charles Fredericks (baritone), with Al Goodman and his Orchestra. Victor set P-236, three discs, price \$3.00. discs, price \$7.00.

LEHAR: *The Merry Widow* — *Maxim's*; *The Blue Mazurka* — *Polenlied*; *Gypsy Love* — *Zorika, Zorika*, and *Lied und Czardas*; *Paganini* — *Gern hab'ich die Frauen gekusst*; *Zarewitsch* — *Wolgalied*; Max Lichtegg (tenor) with the Zurich Tonhalle Orch., Victor Reinshagen, conductor. London Decca set LA63, three discs, price

The Victor set is a memorial album to Franz Lehar, who died last October at 78. The London Decca album honors Lehar, of course, but the tenor singer gets the spotlight on the cover title. Miss Farrell does not quite have the verve of the true operetta primadonna, but her voices remains a joy to the ear. If a bit complacent, her partner possesses a good voice, and so between them they manage smooth performances worth hearing. The competent, but unexciting, Al Goodman handles the orchestral backgrounds. Excellent recording.

Max Lichtegg is a typical German operetta tenor, whose singing varies in quality and appeal. His performances, always zesty, however, convey a true feeling for the medium. Had he more of the charm of the late Richard Tauber, he'd be unrivalled in his field. The knowing orchestral direction of Victor Reinshagen is especially praiseworthy. The recording is good, but not quite as brilliant as I expected. —J. N.

MAHLER: *Erinnerung*; *Scheiden und Meiden*; *Nicht wiederschen*; *Ich ging mit Lust durch einen gruenen Wald*; *Abloesung im Sommer*; *Hans und Gretel*; *Fruehling-morgen*; *Starke Einbildungskraft*. Desi Halban (soprano) with Bruno Walter at the piano. Columbia set MM-809, three 10-inch discs, \$3.90.

▲ Here is a good selection of Mahler's early songs. He was as always a lover of folk and folk-like poetry, and a master of a similar kind of melody. Many of the best of his later songs found their texts in the great Arnim and Brentano collection of folk poet-

ry, *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, and in the set from which the present program is selected we find several settings of this verse. These songs seem in a way like the later and better known ones in embryo, for they want only the orchestral colors which later became an integral part of his music, and a certain bigness of line which he developed with the years. They have the same rather ambling forms, and they are interspersed in his characteristic way with piano commentary.

The performances, on the face of things, should be definitive, and for that reason the set is a little disappointing. Miss Halban, daughter of the great soprano Selma Kurz (who was a protégée of Mahler) is herself gifted with an appealing and expressive soprano voice, and all the musicianship and intelligence the songs require. There is a certain "diffuseness" in her tones, however, which is emphasized by the poor balance of the recording. Mr. Walter, fine musician though he is, is rather a modest pianist, and even so the recording plays him down. I presume on this evidence that the records have been awaiting release, for nowadays Columbia generally meets a higher mechanical standard. All this is not helped by some rather rough surfaces.

All the songs are new to records except *Hans und Gretel*, available before the war in a performance by Suzanne Sten (Columbia 17241D) who treated the music somewhat less lightly than does Miss Halban. —P.L.M.

MAGGIE TEYTE COLLECTION: *Conversation Piece* — *I'll Follow my Secret Heart* and *Nevermore* (Coward); *What Is Done, You Never Can Undo* from *The Lilac Domino* (Cuvillier); *Deep in my Heart Dear* from *The Student Prince* (Romberg); *Sir Roger de Coverly* — *Sweet Mistress Prue* and *Carefree* (Leigh); *Songs My Mother Taught Me* (Dvorak); *Christina's Lament* (Dvorak); Maggie Teyte (soprano) with orchestral accompaniment in all except in the Dvorak songs. London Decca set LA-66, four 10-inch discs, price \$4.75.

▲ Miss Teyte made these recordings for English Decca in the middle thirties. London Decca is to be commended for assembling them in one album and making them available to the singer's many admirers in this country. As the annotator so aptly says: these songs "reveal the lighter side of her repertoire, and are of more generalized appeal

than the fare with which her name is musical-ly associated in the concert hall, nevertheless they are worthy mementoes of a rare artistic personality". There is charm of manner and vocal ease in the soprano's singing. I found her most appealing in the operetta selections. The vocal setting of Dvorak's *Humoresque*, *Christina's Lament*, is the only selection in which she fails to sustain my interest.

—J.N.

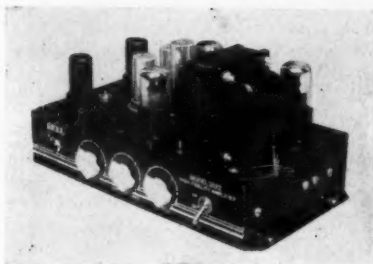
POLYPHONIC MASTERS OF THE XVI CENTURY: *O Vos Omnes* (Palestrina), *Ave Vera Virginitas* (Josquin de Pres), *Ecce Quomodo Moritur Justus* (Palestrina), *In Pace In Idipsum* (Orlando di Lasso), Kyrie and Agnus Dei from *Missa "Ave Maris Stella"* (Josquin des Pres), *Laudate Dominum* (Palestrina), *Jubilare Deo* (Carolus Andreas), *Cantate Domino* (Viadana); The Graduating Class of the Gregorian Institute (Toledo, Ohio), directed by Dom Erwin Vitry, O.S.B. Album PM 1, four discs, price \$7.65.

▲ It can be agreed with the sponsors of this set that "we are in dire need of recordings which emphasize the true qualifications" of the famous polyphonic music of the 16th century. Not since the famous Dijon Cathedral Choir volume (Victor set 212) have we had, in my humble estimation, a worthier or better chosen selection of polyphonic compositions in one program. Nor have we had a better sung group. The 1948 Graduating Class of the Gregorian Institute are fine singers whose training has obviously been most proficient. The direction of Dom Vitry, vital and sympathetic, is especially appealing for unification of mood, line, and balance. Moreover, the exceptionally fine recording with proper acoustical resonance clarifies and vivifies the performances. The smooth quality of the record surfaces leaves little to be desired.

The two Responsories of Palestrina — *O vos omnes* and *Ecce quomodo* — are among the composer's finest works, and the *Ave Vera* of Josquin des Pres has a flower-like melodic loveliness. The motet *In pace idipsum* of di Lasso cannot fail to interest the student of music in its ingenious development of a simple figure of Sol-Mi-Do. The annotator rightfully calls attention to its daring modulations and its "radiant expansion" of the three parts. Perhaps the

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cream of the album for most, who admire the lofty polyphonic art of this period, will be the two sections from Josquin des Pres's mass, *Ave Maris Stella*. Here, we have daring melodic writing from a great religious melodist, whom the annotator designates as "the true ancestor of the modern Schubert". This is a most welcome addition to the slim list of the master's works on records. One hopes that Dom Vitry will arrange to make another album of similar works with the Graduating Class of 1949, for this is a most worthy endeavor well accomplished.

—P.H.R.

PUCCINI: *La Boheme* — *Vecchia zimarra*; and **GOUNOD:** *Faust* — *Serenade*; Italo Tajo (bass) with Orchestra of the Italian Radio, conducted by Mario Rossi. Cetra disc 2050, price \$1.75. (Both sung in Italian).

MOZART: *Don Giovanni* — *Madamina, il catalogo*; Italo Tajo, with Orchestra of the Italian Radio, conducted by Mario Rossi. Cetra 10-inch disc 2049, price \$1.25.

Tajo portrays Colline in the opera house as a youth, which he was in Musset's original story. His "old coat" aria is tenderly sung, but rather subdued for a young fellow. The basso's singing of Mephistofele's *Serenade* reveals a feeling for nuance and subtle sinister suggestions. In some ways, his performance recalls the recording (12-inch one) made by Plancon.

Those who think that Leporello should provide laughs and indulge in clowning, as Baccaloni does in his interpretation, will be disappointed in Tajo's performance of the Catalogue aria. He tends to over-refine the character, though he adds a few chuckles between lines. Actually his singing is consistently smooth, but it is the sort of artistry one associates with Figaro rather than Leporello. The orchestral direction in all three selections and the recording is praiseworthy.

SACRED SONGS: *Elijah* — *O Rest In the Lord and Hear Ye, Israel!* (Mendelssohn); *The Messiah* — *He Shall Feed his Flock and I Know that my Redeemer Liveth* (Handel); *Xerxes* — *Largo and Israel in Egypt* — *Dank sei dir, Herr* (Handel); *Komm, suessrer Tod* (Bach); *Agnus Dei* (Bizet); Helen Traubel (soprano) with

Orchestra conducted by Charles O'Connell. Columbia MM-807, five discs, price \$7.25 and Long Playing disc ML-4117, price \$4.85.

▲Miss Traubel steps out of the opera house and returns to her days as a church soloist in St. Louis. There are numerous recordings of all of these compositions to compete with the soprano's and most of us undoubtedly possess many of them. In her own right, Miss Traubel is a gifted artist, and her many admirers will unquestionably welcome this set. Whether to show her versatility or the rich quality of her middle voice, the soprano includes two contralto arias from *Elijah* and *The Messiah* which she sings expressively. The recording in both cases is satisfactorily handled.

STRAUSS, Johann (arr. Benatzky): *Nuns' Chorus* from *Casanova*; Anni Frind (soprano) with Chorus and Orch., and **CHABRIER:** *Habanera*; RCA Victor Orch., conducted by Jean Paul Morel. Victor disc 12-0769, price \$1.25.

▲Though the *Nuns' Chorus* remains one of the strangest oddities on record, with the sainted sisters singing waltz melodies, the soprano voice of Anni Frind with its limpid and soaring beauty of tone will undoubtedly please many listeners. Yet, Morel's fine performance of Chabrier's colorful *Habanera* is the strongest recommendation for buying the disc. Benatzky has devised a sort of weak and sentimental counterpart of Mascagni's Easter Hymn from *Cavalleria Rusticana*. Frind recalled to mind for one listener the old recording of Emmy Bettendorf in the latter selection. She floats her voice with similar ease and beauty. The recording is good on both sides, with the American engineers stealing an edge on the foreign ones.

—J.N.

STRAUSS: *Morgen, Op. 27, No. 4; Befreit, Op. 39, No. 4*. Marian Anderson (contralto) and Franz Rupp (piano). Victor 12-0734, \$1.25.

▲Speaking of her second husband, the actor Paul Schumann, Ernestine Schumann-Heink has written: "There is one great song, *Befreit*, by Richard Strauss, that I studied with him. The words are so beautiful. It is the farewell of a father to his wife as he leaves the children in her care. Schumann studied this with me so carefully, so tender-

ly. I think now perhaps at that very time, when he was already failing, he felt he had only a few more years to live. It was one of my most beloved songs, but after he died, I could not sing it any more."

This real masterpiece exacts from Miss Anderson some of the finest singing she has done in recent seasons, though the feature of the performance is the magnificent playing of the piano part by Franz Rupp. Older collectors will long cherish a recording made sometime around 1930 by Rosette Anday (Polydor 95165) for which I believe (though the label on my copy does not so state) Mr. Rupp also played. If Miss Anderson hardly rivals the perfection of Anday's singing, she does her part well and with conviction, rising with Rupp to a superb climax. This is a song that should be heard, and the recording is important for this if for no other reason.

Morgen, though one of the best known of all the Strauss songs, and very frequently recorded, is rarely sung satisfactorily. Even more than *Befreit*, this is in very truth a duet for voice and piano. Because of its soaring instrumental melody, it has perhaps most frequently been done with an *obbligato* for violin or cello — indeed until rather recently the difficulties of recording the piano in such sustained lines was a strong argument in favor of another instrument. This is the shortcoming of the old Schlusnus record (Polydor 62714) for which Rupp played with more intensity than he achieves with Miss Anderson. The contralto's tone at the outset seems a bit bright for the mood of the song, and, because of some unsteadiness, she does not breathe into the first phrase as naturally and easily as one might wish — the singer should in effect take over from the pianist, as though the thought implied in the introduction had at this point become articulate. Gradually Miss Anderson works herself into the song. After a little embarrassment over the pitch on the word *Wogen* — the melodic top of the whole piece — she sings *still und langsam* very beautifully indeed, and her treatment of the last two lines carries real conviction. But for the perfect capturing of the mood of *Morgen* we must still return to the early electric disc of Elisabeth Schumann (HMV DB 1010) for which Isolde Menges provided an *obbligato*.

The new Victor recording is full, clear and excellently balanced. —P.L.M.

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SICILIAN FOLK SONGS: *A'Barcillunisa*, and *Cantu a Timuni*; Giuseppe di Stefano (tenor), with orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede. Victor 10-inch disc 10-1461, price \$1.00.

▲As one listens to the warm expressive singing of di Stefano in these folk songs, memories of Sicily with its intense blue of sky and rich coloring of earth and field, and more especially the luscious orange and yellow of the famous Valle d'oro, return to mind. The tenor sings as though his heart were in that enchanted, history-laden land, and one wonders about the meaning of his songs. The Sicilian dialect is somewhat difficult.

—P.H.R.

WAGNER: *Lohengrin* — *Hochstes Vertrau'n*, and *In fernem Land*; Set Svanholm (tenor) with RCA Victor Orchestra, conducted by Frieder Weissmann. Victor disc 12-0671, price \$1.25.

▲This is the most disappointing record that Svanholm has given us. He shows little sympathy for the character of Lohengrin. Though Wagner marks the passage where Elsa demands knowledge of her husband's name and race to be sung "sternly and gravely", there is much tenderness in the scene, which seems to evade Svanholm. In Lohengrin's Narrative he sings with manly style but scant feeling. Some of the tenor's phrasing is insensitive. Perhaps in the rush of things before the ban, the tenor was called upon to make too many record sides. Weissmann directs the orchestra with complete competence and the recording engineers have ably handled their job.

—J.N.

WELSH FOLK SONGS: *Yr Hen Geddor* (*The Old Minstrel*); *Arafa Don* (*Be Still, O Wave*); *Elen Fwyn* (*Gentle Ellen*); *Sul Y Blodau* (*Palm Sunday*); David Lloyd (tenor) with Meirion Williams (piano). London Decca set LA70, two discs, \$5.00.

▲The Welsh-born David Lloyd has established himself at Glyndebourne in England and elsewhere as a gifted operatic tenor, yet like all singers he remembers his native songs. He has chosen four unusual and appealing ones, arranged by well known folk specialists. The piano accompaniments, excellently played and recorded, may be regarded by some as a bit too artfully handled, and Lloyd's singing too polished. Yet, the ingratiating quality of the tenor's voice and

his unmistakable devotion for the music are strong points for endorsement of this set. Moreover, the recording is very lifelike.

—J.N.

* * *

SHAKESPEARE: *Hamlet* — *Excerpts* (with Music by William Walton); Laurence Olivier, Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Muir Mathieson. Victor set DM-1273, three discs, price \$5.75 (manual \$6.75).

▲Miss Hermonie Gingold, who is to London what Beatrice Lille was formerly, urges audiences of her revue *Slings and Arrows* to see a current stage *Hamlet* on the grounds "it is the play of the film". Here, quite literally, is the album of the film of the play. These discs are taken directly from the movie soundtrack — less perhaps because of laziness than because Sir Laurence Olivier left for his Old Vic tour Down Under too soon after filming to enable H.M.V. to make original recordings, as was done with *Henry V*.

Malapropos criticism still shrieks over Text Editor Alan Dent's brilliant cutting of Shakespeare's oracular tongue in favor of Olivier's cinematic eye. Absolutes of criticism realize, however, that with Olivier — and that voice like a resonant stiletto probing the ultimate layers of meaning — it is possible to cut your Shakespearian cake and have it too. Olivier's film for example, ignores or underplays the flat soliloquies. Olivier's mind, however, illuminates or elevates to virtuosic statue passages that have previously been overwhelmed by the speeches which sends one's schoolmarm into LUL-LIAN paroxysms of memorization. Forty thousand ranting brothers of Garrick could not make up the sum of glorious ham in Olivier's handling of the "Remember me" passage. Nor could they begin to touch the transcendental realism of his advice to the players, the wit in the baiting of Polonius.

Only pedants, for the most part, are amazed by the film's use of visual images wherever possible. But the record album's appropriation of these same visual images into its unique, purely oral medium, cannot be defended — this side television. Most of the set, as a soundtrack, is given over perforce to unseeable photographic technique or to William Walton's accompanying music, unaccompanied by what it was composed to accompany.

To those like me, who consider Olivier the best of all possible Shakespearians, this album cannot prove the worst of all possible Shakespearean releases. This is not to say, nonetheless, that someone was not in there, trying!

—Robert D. Olson.

Long Playing Discs

▲Columbia's continuance with its Microgroove issues of past releases is enterprising to say the least. The dubbing of its former recordings of Handel's *The Messiah* and the Pinza — Metropolitan Chorus scenes from Moussorgsky's *Boris Godounow* reveal the skill of its engineers in such matters. The former, which originally occupied nineteen 12-inch discs, is now inclusive on three 12-inch Microgrooves (set SL-51), while the *Boris* occupies a single record (No. ML 4115). Two symphonies fare well in their long-playing versions — Dvorak's *No. 4 in G major* (Walter and the Philharmonic Symphony Orch. — disc ML 4119) and Saint-Saëns' *No. 3 in C minor* (Muench and the same orchestra — disc ML 4120).

That thoroughly delightful album, by the duo-pianists Morley and Gearhart, with the somewhat ambiguous title of *Night Life on Two Pianos*, is pressed on one 10-inch Microgroove (ML 2033), and Marek Weber's *In Old Vienna* is obtainable on one 10-inch disc (CL 6034). Claude Thornhill's *Piano Reflections* also can be had on a 10-inch Microgroove (CL 6035).

Examples of engineering betterment of old 78 r.p.m. performances is to be found in the Microgroove set (SL-52, two discs) of the Ralph Kirkpatrick and Alexander Schneider first album of Mozart piano and violin sonatas. Kirkpatrick's harpsichord in the long-playing version is less ponderous and better balanced, and one is glad to recommend these discs to chamber music enthusiasts. Too, all of the wartime recordings of the Budapest String Quartet are in their Microgroove versions far better than in the originals, offering more natural and cleaner reproduction of this organization's playing. These include five Beethoven quartets — *Op. 18, Nos. 1, 4 and 6, Op. 131 and Op. 132*, one Haydn — *The Horseman Quartet, Op. 74, No. 3* and the Debussy *Quartet*.

It is to be hoped that Columbia will issue in the near future Microgroove versions of three fine foreign sets — Ravel's delightful opera — *Les enfants et les sortilèges*, Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Dalila*, and Berlioz's *Requiem*. How far back in its catalogue the company intends going is not known. However, there are quite a number of older sets which readers have asked us to petition. These include the two albums of that inimitable artist, Claudia Muzio, the Busch Chamber Players' performances of the Bach *Brandenburg Concertos*, the French recording of Gluck's *Orpheus*, and the early Italian recordings of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *Falstaff* (it is doubtful that the latter will be duplicated in the near future, if for many years to come). Another suggestion, advanced by several readers, is a Microgroove disc containing the splendid operatic recordings of Georges Thill. This is one we

Following our MILHAUD offering, (see p. 211 of this issue), there will be these subscription releases:—

VIVALDI:— Concerto in B flat ("La Notte") for bassoon, harpsichord and strings (3-12" sides), Concerto in C ("Per la Solemnita di S. Lorenzo") for two violins, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, bassoon, harpsichord and strings (3-12" sides), and Symphony in B minor ("Al S. Sepolcro"), 1st and 2nd Movts., for strings (2-12" sides). These 4-12" records are played by musicians of the Scala orchestra under direction of Mo. Angelo Ephrikian. Auto-coupled.

BARTOK:— Sonata for two pianos and percussion instruments. Gino Gorini and Sergio Lorenzi, duo-pianists; percussionists from the Stabile Fiorentina Orchestra conducted by Mo. Gracis. (3-12" records.) Auto-coupled.

FRANCAIX:— "L'heure du Berger", Op. 41 (3-12" sides), and "La Melancolie" (4th side). Pasquier Trio with Mignot, violin, and Logerot, contrabass.

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heartily endorse, for Thill's rich toned and manly singing on his 1930 Columbia discs remains some of the best French tenor performances on records. It would give Columbia an opportunity to restore that unprecedented version of one of Berlioz's most thrilling operatic scenes, from *Les Troyens a Carthage* (former Columbia disc 9098-M).

Other long-playing discs, just announced, are a three record set of Shakespeare's *Othello* in the performance headed by Paul Robson, Jose Ferrer, and Uta Hagen; a two record set of Menotti's operas *The Medium* and *The Telephone*; a single disc linking the Mitropoulos — Minneapolis Symphony Orch. rendition of the Mendelssohn *Capriccio* brilliant with a new recording of the composer's *Italian Symphony* by the Cleveland Orchestra, conducted by George Szell; a new recording of Stravinsky's *Symphony of the Psalms* (coupled with his *Symphony in Three Movements*); a single disc issue of the Ormandy-Philadelphia Orch. performance of Sibelius' *Second Symphony*; and a single disc issue of the recent Beethoven *Trio in D major, Op. 70, No. 1* coupled with two new Rudolf Serkin performances of Beethoven's *Sonata in F sharp major, Op. 78* and *Fantasia in G minor, Op. 77*. Discussion of the new works will follow next month.

Recent FFRR Releases

The Erich Kleiber-London Philharmonic performance of Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony* (EDA 95) has many admirable musical qualities, though the conductor's pacing of the *Andante molto mosso* does not conform to the composer's marking — being an *andante* without the *molto mosso*, and the final *Allegretto* is too deliberately paced. The recording is excellent.

Ansermet continues to reveal his musical values as a conductor. His performance of Mozart's *Symphony in D major, K. 504 (The Prague)*, with the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, is cleanly played with a forthright style which favorably serves the music (EDA 91, price \$7.00). Good recording, but not by any means as impressive as Ansermet's performance of the Debussy *Petite Suite*, made with the Paris Conservatory Orchestra (EDA-98, price \$5.00).

Enrique Jorda, conducting the National Symphony and London Symphony Orchestras in Suites 1 and 2 from de Fallas's *The Three Cornered Hat* (EDA 60, price \$9.00) gets best results with the last orchestra and gives us some most welcome, unfamiliar music in this instance. These two suites should have been issued in two albums, as in England. The automatic sequence will prove confusing, for each suite, taking two discs, has to be played as a unit. The first suite contains the better known dances of the Neighbor the Miller and the Finale. They are undoubtedly the best sections of the work, yet the scenes and dances of the 2nd suite are so colorful and charming that one cannot understand their neglect. The Dance of the Miller's Wife is a *fandango*, which J. B. Trend in his book on the composer describes as "a completely 'abstract' piece of dancing, which holds the audience in tense excitement from the first to the last beat". It is most exciting on the record. Music characterizing the Corregidor follows, then comes the scene in which the Miller's wife offers — or pretends to offer — him "the first fruit of the grapes, always keeping them just out of his reach until he slips and falls on his back". The Corregidor is endeavoring to make love to the Miller's wife during her husband's absence but she outwits him. In recent months we had the first suite in a splendid performance by the young Italian conductor Alceo Galliera. While Jorda handles this music with style and zest, he lacks the incisive rhythmic approach of Galliera, but with such splendid recording his performance is well worth acquiring, especially for the music of the second suite.

The lovely voice of Kathleen Ferrier is heard in Brahms' *Allo Rhapsody*, with Male Choir and the London Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Clemens Krauss (EDA 69, price \$5.00). Hers is by far the most tender and expressive performance of this quasi-religious work, but the recording is not as well balanced as it should have been. Whether the fault of the engineers or the conductor, the orchestral support is often vague and insufficient. Ill luck seems to pursue the recording of this work, for none is completely satisfying in recording balance.

Debussy's three *Nocturnes* undoubtedly gets its best reproduction in Decca set EDA 62 (price \$7.00) but the performance of

Sidney Beer and the National Symphony Orchestra (with Luton Choral Society in *Sirènes*) is rather unimaginatively straightforward and lacking in the evocative poetic qualities of the music.

A few years back, the London firm Rimington-Van Wyck brought out an album of Russian songs sung by Oda Slobadskaya, one of the most gifted Russian sopranos on records. The recording was made for the famous London record shop by English Decca, which forbade their importation. As a compensation to those who have been unable to get a friend to bring back from England Mme. Slobadskaya's album, Decca has issued a single disc (K. 1206, price \$2.00) containing the soprano's renditions of *The Dreary Steppe* (Gretchaninoff), *From My Tears, Spring Flowers and Water Nymphs* (Borodin), and *The Hebrew Melody* (Bakireff). This singer has a way with a song and her high tones are of unusual beauty.

Recent Importations

VERDI: *I Vespri Siciliani* — *O tu Palermo*; and BOITO: *Mefistofele* — *Son lo spirito che nega*; Cesare Siepi (bass) with orchestra, conducted by Arturo Basile. Cetra disc 2069, price \$1.75.

This young bass singer will bear watching. If he does not rival old singer's performances of both these arias on records, he does reveal a well schooled voice and a feeling for characterization.

—J.N.

CILEA: *Adriana Lecouvreur* — *Io son l'umile ancella*; and MASCAGNI: *Cavalleria Rusticana* — *Voi lo sapete o mamma*; Pia Tassinari (soprano) with Italian Radio Orch., conducted by Arturo Basile. Cetra disc BB-25235, price \$2.50.

PONCHIELLI: *La Gioconda* — *Enzo Grimaldo, Principe di Santafior*; Giacinto Prandelli (tenor) and Antenore Reali (baritone) with Italian Radio Orch., conducted by Arturo Basile. Cetra disc BB 25218, price \$2.50.

VERDI: *Simon Boccanegra* — *Il lacerato spirito*; and ROSSINI: *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* — *La calunnia*; Luciano Neroni (bass) with EIAR Orch., conducted by Ugo Tansini. Cetra disc BB 25144, price \$2.50.

VERDI: *Aida* — *Celeste Aida*; and PONCHIELLI: *La Gioconda* — *Cielo e mar*; Galliano Masini (tenor) with EIAR Orch., conducted by Ugo Tansini. Cetra disc BB 25039, price \$2.50.

GIORDANO: *Fedora* — *Mia Madre, la mia vecchia Madre*; Galliano Masini (tenor) with Italian Radio Orch., conducted by Arturo Basile. Cetra disc BB 25223, price \$2.50.

LEOCAVALLO: *Zaza* — *Zaza, mio piccola zingara*; and CILEA: *L'Arlesiana* — *Racconto di Badassare*; Antenore Reali (baritone) with Italian Radio Orch., conducted by Arturo Basile. Cetra disc BB 25130, price \$2.50.

VERDI: *Un Ballo in Maschera* — *Alla vita che t'arride*; Antenore Reali (baritone) and PUCCINI: *La Tosca* — *Gia mi dicon venal*; Alexander Sved (baritone) with Italian Radio Orchestra, conducted by Simonetto. Cetra disc BB 25211, price \$2.50.

This group of importations from Italy may leave one with mixed feelings regarding that country's singers of today, yet the evidence of marked talent and fine voices can hardly be denied. Tassinari is, of course, a

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seasoned artist and hers is an appealing voice. How wisely she refrains from pushing her lyrical qualities beyond their capacities is borne out in her recording of Santuzza's aria. Her rendition has tonal sweetness and feeling without dramatic stress. The aria from *Adriana Lecouvreur* is warmly sung with emotional appeal.

The young tenor, Prandelli, of whom we spoke previously, has an ingratiating, lyric voice which he uses with discretion rather than valor in a duet from *La Gioconda* where tenors usually like to be more fervent and dramatic. His part of the duet is well sung with unmistakable youthful fervor. His companion, of whom more below, makes the most of the villain's role.

Neroni, the bass, is a gifted artist. His singing, characterized by dignity and poise, is most impressive in the Verdi aria. The Rossini, equally well sung, lacks sufficient dramatic impact.

Masini is more concerned with vocal fervor than feeling in his renditions of *Celeste Aida* and *Cielo e mar*. The words of both make little sense in his robust, self-centered absorption with these arias. Inasmuch as the narrative of Loris, from *Fedora*, has to do with the character's own emotions (it is a confession of a murder which he committed in self defense) the tenor's style of singing is more appreciable. Few would deny that Masini possesses a naturally fine voice.

Reale has a dark-hued baritone. His singing is warm and earnest, but slightly marred when he presses the tone unconditionally, causing too much vibrato. His best singing is in the lyrical aria from *L'Arlesiana*, though his renditions of Cascart's air and *Alla vita* have much feeling. Sved sings the Scarpia aria with tonal richness and vibrancy.

In all these discs, the recording is realistically handled with first-rate orchestral accompaniments.

—P.H.R.

Editorial Notes

(Continued from page 194)

than the long-playing disc. Whether the degree of superior quality of the 45 will make up for continuity interruption is, by and large, a personal matter. One is reminded of the old axiom of looking a gift horse in the face.

Victor will also place on the market a player attachment, equipped with a pickup compensated for wide range reproduction, especially for owners of the Berkshire machine. The reproduction of this pickup will encompass a range from 30 to 15,000 c.p.s. Undoubtedly, this unit will be procurable by all for widely general use on extended range equipment.

The 45 would seem to be regarded as a logical development in the popular field. This is borne out by its adoption by Capitol, unquestionably the largest distributor and recorder in this field. However, this concern who will shortly begin repressing German Telefunken recordings of classical music announces that the latter will be made available on both 78 and 45 records. Victor informs us that all future releases will be simultaneously made available in both 78 and 45 speeds.

Capitol's agreement with Telefunken was made through the head of that concern's distribution in Sweden. The agreement gives Capitol the American pressing and distribution rights to the entire Telefunken catalogue, and, at the same time, provides Capitol masters be pressed and distributed by Telefunken throughout Europe (except in those countries under Russian domination). The first release (78 pressings) will be issued on March 28. The date for 45 r.p.m. issue is not given. Thereafter, the company states, releases will be monthly on the first Monday of each month. The number of recordings will vary in each release, but these will include several albums and singles. Eventually, Capitol intends to repress the entire Telefunken catalogue.

Capitol's first Telefunken release contains five albums and four singles. The sets are an Erna Sack album (3 discs), *Franz Lehar Operettas* featuring Anita Cura, Elisabeth Schwartzkopf, Peter Anders, Hugo Wulff and others (3 discs), Mengelberg's performance of Beethoven's *Eroica* symphony with Concertgebouw Orchestra (6 discs), the Hindemith-Berlin Philharmonic performance of the composer's *Mathis der Maler* (3 discs), and the Hamburg State Choir and Orchestra rendition of Bruckner's *Mass in E minor* (5 discs). The singles comprise an Erna Sack disc, Verdi's *Sicilian Vespers Overture* — Marinuzzi and La Scala Orch., overture to Gluck's *Alceste* — Furtwaengler and the

Berlin Philharmonic, and Berlioz's *Roman Carnival* overture by Mengelberg and the Concertgebouw Orch.

The Telefunken list of artists is a most imposing group. Among vocalists are Erner Berger, Marta Fuchs, Elisabeth Schwartzkopf (sopranos); Peter Anders, Max Lorenz, Franz Berger, Helge Roswaenge, Marcel Wittrisch (tenors), Gerhard Huesch, Hans Herman Nissen, Rudolf Bockelmann (baritones), and Italo Tajo and Wilhelm Shirk (bassos). Among instrumentalists are Claudio Arrau, Erik Then Bergh, Gaspar Cassado, Georg Kulenkampff, Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli, Calvet String Quartet, Stross Quintet, and the famous German organist — Fritz Heitmann. Conductors include van Beinum, Furtwaengler, Mengelberg, Jochum, Kleiber, Krauss, Shuricht, and Stravinsky. The list of orchestras includes some of Europe's most famous: the Berlin and Vienna Philharmonic, Concertgebouw, Bayreuth Festival, Bavarian State Opera, Stockholm Radio Symphony, Hamburg State Philharmonic, and Brussels Radio.

* * *

These are, comments one enthusiastic record buyer, confusing times for all of us, yet surely all these improvements, transitions and varieties of recordings offer adventures in music's reproduction never previously paralleled. The true music lover is faced with less of a quandry than most would think. Changes in equipment or speeds of records are not necessary just because the other fellow does it. The main thing remains, and always will remain, the appreciation of music. There is no just reason to consider junking one's existent record collection nor to cease one's purchases, if the enjoyment of music is one's chief pursuit.

In The Popular Vein

Enzo Archetti

Always True To You In My Fashion (from "Kiss Me, Kate") and *Just Reminiscent*; Jo Stafford, The Starlighters, with Paul Weston and His Orchestra. Capitol 15378.
Why Can't You Behave. (from "Kiss Me, Kate") and *What's My Name*. Fran Warren,

with Orchestra conducted by Henri Rene. Victor 20-3330.

Why Can't You Behave. (from "Kiss Me, Kate"); Frank Sinatra and The Phil Moore Trio. *No Orchids For My Lady*; Frank Sinatra, with Orchestra under the direction of Axel Stordahl. Columbia 28292.

So In Love (from "Kiss Me, Kate") and *While the Angelus Was Ringing* (*Les Trois Cloches*); Tommy Dorsey and His Orchestra, with vocals by Denny Dennis. Victor 20-3331.

While the Angelus Was Ringing (*Les Trois Cloches*) and *My Dream Is Yours*; Margaret Whiting, with Orchestra. Capitol 15364.

● If you do not want the Columbia album of the new Cole Porter hit show *Kiss Me, Kate*, with the original cast, this group of singles will prove quite satisfying. The Stafford is vocally better than its counterpart in the album but not as effective when isolated from the score. The same can be said of Warren's but the Sinatra of the same tune is tops, as much for interpretation as for Moore's fine support. The Dorsey is good, though Denny Dennis' voice is a bit heavy for the song.

As flipovers, we have a batch of smooth individual performances. *While the Angelus* is a sentimental, Continental flavored trifle, which, despite Tommy Dorsey's heartwarming trombone solo, is immediately challenged by the brighter Margaret Whiting. The latter has a more appropriate orchestral background. Sinatra's reverse is first-rate, including the orchestra. This stands out as the best record in the batch though Fran Warren's *What's My Name*.

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actually steals the show for the best single side. Stafford's and Whiting's alternates are pleasantly sentimental.

Stan Kenton Encores; Stan Kenton and His Orchestra. Capitol Album CC-113, 3-10" discs.

He Was A Good Man As Men Go and *How Am I To Know*; Stan Kenton and His Orchestra. Capitol 15327.

● Now that Kenton's orchestra is no more and he threatens to give up music, (Progressive Jazz in particular) to search for new fields of interest (maybe psychiatry, he says), these releases take on new significance. Regardless of the ultimate value of Progressive Jazz, Kenton's efforts to express himself a la Stravinsky, Dohnanyi and others within the restrictions of jazz formula and jazz orchestra has been stimulating relief.

As a parting gesture, Capitol has assembled a "swan song," album of six favorites with Kenton's audiences all over the country: *Peg O' My Heart*; *Chorale For Brass, Piano, and Bongo*; *He's Funny That Way*; *Abstraction*; *Somnambulism*; and *Capitol Punishment*. This is not music for relaxation. It is too exciting, frenetic. As an introduction to Stan Kenton and his stimulating jazz, nothing could be better than this album.

The single is cast in the same mold, though the material is not as good.

The Love Nest and *Lady of Spain*; The Philharmonica Trio, with Rhythm Accompaniment. Capitol 15346.

● A harmonica group with technique and ideas enough to meet any challenger. Spirited performances and excellent support.

Arizona Sundown (DeLange-Alter) and *Marcella*; Freddy Martin and His Orchestra. Vocals by Glenn Hughes and The Martin Men. Victor 20-3254.

● *Arizona Sundown* has an engaging tune and rhythm. It should sound well as a straight orchestral number. This very thought makes the present record, predominantly vocal, unsatisfying. The voices and words seem intrusive. The reverse, a bouncy tune with a Gay Ninety atmosphere, is the best of the two sides.

If You Will Marry Me and *You Was*; Doris Day and Buddy Clarke, with Orchestra under the direction of Mitchell Ayres. Columbia 38392.

● These two artists continue their success as duetists. The first song has a folk quality. Definitely, it resembles *Billy Boy*, revived and repopularized by Burl Ives. Well done, here. So is the reverse, which is not musically of the same quality, being just cute.

The Sun's Rays — Waltz and *My Love*—Schottische; Anthony De Bernardi and His Orchestra. Capitol 52007

● These are better known as *Raggi di Sole* and *Amor Mio*, two popular Italian dance

pieces in the style and spirit of another generation. Neatly done.

Oh, How I Miss You Tonight and *Just One of Those Things*; Les Brown and His Orchestra. Columbia 38381.

● First-rate performances — as jazz. The first, a study in contrasts, begins in its original waltz tempo with sentimental vocal by Ray Kellogg, then switches to jump tempo with rhythm vocal by Eileen Wilson. The reverse is the Cole Porter tune from *Jubilee* but played in Les Brown style — not as Porter wrote it.

Oomp-pah — Waltz and *Firemen's Polka*; Six Fat Dutchmen. Haold Loefflemacher, conductor. Victor 20-332.

● Good, German brass band style and tempo. Plenty of fat tuba oomp-pah in the polka. Foot-tickling.

Once In Love With Amy (from *Where's Charley*.) and *Sunflower*; Frank Sinatra. Columbia 38391.

● The *Where's Charley*. number, by Frank Loesser, has the characteristic lilt and orchestration. It should be a hit before long, after this Sinatra version gets around. *Sunflower* is a Western, probably Frankie's first attempt in this field. Not too successful.

Moonlight Romance and *You, You, You Are the One*; Victor 20-3322. *You Grew Up To Be Some Baby* and *Oh! My Darling*; Victor 20-3253. The Three Suns, with Artie Dunn and The Sun Maids.

● *Moonlight* is all instrumental in the best Three Suns' manner. This will definitely be one of their hit records. And to help matters, the reverse is a pleasing vocal-instrumental arrangement of the old German waltz tune, *Du, du, du bist mein*. . . . The second disc is good, too, but not quite as original. Only *You Grew Up* has some felicitous touches.

With A Song In My Heart and *Blue Room* (both from *Words and Music*); Perry Como, with Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Henri Rene. Victor 20-3329.

● *With A Song*, sung with gusto, has good support. *Blue Room* is taken at too slow a pace suggesting the wrong mood. Good singing and playing doesn't save it.

Anticipation Without Realization and *Everybody's Friend But Nobody's Sweetheart*; Louis Prima and His Orchestra. Vocals by Louis Prima and Cathy Allen. Victor 20-3276.

● In spite of an amusing and valiant struggle with long words, *Anticipation* doesn't stand out as a particularly successful Louis Prima. It has bounce but little else. The reverse is only fair.

Tenement Symphony — 2 parts (as featured in the film *Big Store*); Tony Martin, with The Skyrockets Orchestra directed by Woolf Phillips. Victor 20-3274.

● This might be called a tone poem for voice and orchestra, descriptive of a tour through a tenement district in a big city. An ambitious idea which doesn't quite come off, on record. On the screen, it is undoubtedly helped by a panoramic camera. A good try at something out of the ordinary but unfortunately the quality of the idea was not matched by the quality of the music.

My Own True Love and *Columbus Stockade Blues*; Victor 20-3252. *Don't Lie To Me* and *A Senorita's Bouquet*; Victor 20-3343. Vaughn Monroe and His Orchestra. Vocals by V. M., The Moon Maids, and Sons of the Pioneers.

● Three of these are the usual V.M. brand of maundering vocalizing, with *Don't Lie To me* a shade better, as a tune. But *Columbus Stockade* is a surprise. V.M. really pepes up and sings as if he were enjoying it. It sounds Western; but that's probably because of the presence of the Sons of the Pioneers.

The Rose of Tralee and *Molly O'Reilly* (from *Lend An Ear*); Clark Dennis, with Paul Weston and His Orchestra. Capitol 15374. *Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral* and *Mother Machree*; Jan Garber and His Orchestra. Vocals by Tommy Traynor. Capitol 15382.

MacNamara's Band and *The Clink Clink Polka*; Spike Jones and His City Slickers. Vocals by Del Porter, Mel Blanc, I.W. Harper, and The Four Fifties. Victor 20-3338.

● A rather weak tribute to St. Patrick's Day but the offerings are not without merit. Clark Dennis does surprisingly well with *Rose of Tralee*, something a little off the beaten path for him, but the reverse is more in his line. It has a fine lilt and Dennis sings with a smile on his lips. The support is excellent.

Both the Garbers are set in the now familiar Jan Garber orchestral style and waltz tempo. Pleasant, if unexciting. Tommy Traynor's version of *Mother Machree* will not capture any laurels.

The surprising thing about *MacNamara's Band* is that it wasn't done before this by Spike Jones. It's a natural for his band's particular brand of shenanigans, though not especially funny, as Spike Jones records go. The *Polk* on the reverse is much better.

Ramona; Gordon Mac Rae, with Vocal Group and Orchestra. *Do You Ever Think of Me*; Gordon Mac Rae, with Orchestra conducted by Carlyle Hall. Capitol 15304. *The Melancholy Minstrel* and *You're Still the Belle of the Ball*; Gordon Mac Rae, with Orchestra. Capitol 15366.

● The *Minstrel* is a rather droopy song but *Belle of the Ball* has an engaging, languorous air in waltz tempo. Mac Rae sings both manfully. A record aimed at the ladies' hearts. The very familiar *Ramona* is given a ringing performance, with unnecessary choral help. *Do You* is straight-forward but not convincing.

Stringopation (David Rose) and *Running off*

the Rails (Richardson) The Columbia Orchestra. Columbia 38384.

● David Rose has written another piquant piece that may rival his *Holiday For Strings*. Richardson's opus is another musical description of a train high-balling down the track. Not too original but interesting. The Columbia Orchestra under an unnamed conductor does both with zest.

Songs To Remember; Peter Yorke and His Orchestra. Columbia Album C-178, 4-10" discs. *I Only Have Eyes For You* and *I'm In the Mood For Love*. Freddy Gardner, saxophone, with Peter Yorke and His Concert Orchestra. Columbia 38346.

● Peter Yorke might be called the English counterpart of our Morton Gould. He specializes in rather elaborate arrangements of simple pieces and songs, classic and semi-classic, but with the important difference that his treatments are not flamboyant. His orchestrations are smooth; rich in color, brilliant but not garish; forceful but never hamishly dramatic. They are keyed for relaxation, with emphasis on melody. His numbers, excellently recorded, include Tate's *Somewhere A Voice Is Calling*; Silesu's *Love, Here Is My Heart*; etc.

On the single, the same technique is applied to two popular jazz songs with equal success featuring Freddy Gardner's mellifluous saxophone.

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Sequence In Jazz; Columbia Album C-177, 3-10" discs. *Everywhere* and *The Goof and I*; Columbia 38369. *Lemon Drop* and *I Ain't Gonna Wait Too Long*; Capitol 38365. Woody Herman and His Orchestra.

● Woody Herman is one of those musicians who has an abundance of imagination and a first rate group of musicians to support his ideas. And though he has eschewed radical experiments, creation of new schools in jazz, "progressive" music, and be-bop, he has absorbed the better qualities of these many styles and fused them with his own.

Both *Summer Sequence*, which is in three parts and epilogue ("slow and peaceful", "fast and furious", and "just happy" — scored for five trumpets, four trombones, drums, bass, guitar, vibraharp, and two pianos) and *Lady McGowan's Dream*, which is in two parts (same orchestration, but with only one piano) are compositions by Ralph Burns (the pianist of the orchestra). They were first introduced at the now historic Carnegie Hall concert in March 1946 when Igor Stravinsky's *Ebony Rhapsody* (especially written for the Herman Herd as a tribute to their fine musicianship) was also played. They shared the success and excitement of the occasion. Now, three years later, their quality remains unchanged and their provocative ideas are still stimulating. Both works are fantasies in which each of Herman's top soloists — Bill Harris, trombone; Charles Jagelka, guitar; Sam Rubinovitch, Joe Phillips, saxes; Jo Mondragon, clarinet; Ralph Burns, piano; as well as himself on sax and clarinet — improvise on languorous themes. The performances are first rate.

Of the singles, *Everywhere* is an Ellington-esque rhapsody for trombone and orchestra which might have been a masterpiece had the soloist (Bill Harris) been more sure of himself. This work needs the technique and tone of a Juan Tizol. The reverse is a jazz improvisation in a more familiar pattern and it has the characteristic Herd bounce.

For his first Capitol disc, Woody chose to do a bop number, *Lemon Drop*, which will out be anybody else's bop performances for some time to come. It's an exciting disc with some swell solos. The reverse is a Benny Carter blues sung by Woody Herman and backed by some "gone" solos on trombone (Bill Harris) and trumpet (Ernie Royal).

Bebop; Dizzy Gillespie, Coleman Hawkins, and Their Orchestras; Henny Clarke and His 52nd Street Boys; Lucky Thompson and His Lucky Seven. Victor Album P-226; 4-10" discs.

Boppin' the Blues and *Just One More Chance*; Lucky Thompson and His Lucky Seven. Victor 20-2504.

● It must be admitted that Leonard Feather has assembled four of the best exponents of bebop, and, collectively, one of the most imposing line-ups of soloists ever gathered between the covers of an album. They present an excellent case for their cause. Most palatable

and easiest to digest are Lucky Thompson's *Boppin' the Blues* and *From Dixieland To Bebop*. His presentations seem least formless and least disorderly. Most exciting, are Dizzy Gillespie's *Cubana Be* and *Cubana Bop*, two primitive pieces. Gillespie is the one who started all this bebop business and he is looked upon as the high priest of the cult. Kenny Clark is least convincing with his *Royal Roost* and *Epistrophe*. Coleman Hawkins' work is least palatable, in spite of some swell sax work by Hawkins and Budd Johnson, probably because his work in a different field of jazz expression is still too fresh in mind. Even if you are a die-hard like me, you should hear this album.

The single of *Boppin' the Blues* is not a repressing of the disc in the album although they are nearly identical. From the markings, it appears to be the second "take" from the same recording session which produced the other — a fourth "take". The reverse is really quite tame and Lucky has an opportunity to display his warm sax tone and facile technique.

Sound Off; Mark Warnow's *Sound Off Orchestra* and Chorus. Capitol Album CB-111, 2-10" discs.

● The distinctive *Sound Off Chant* that identified the original Army radio show of that name, is familiar to many. It cannot fail to thrill with each rehearing. It is included here, featuring Arno Tanney, the same chorus and orchestra as on the radio, with a special set of blue lyrics added. It is just as effective on record.

In addition, there are two splendid Sousa marches, *Stars and Stripes Forever* and *El Capitan*, stirringly presented, with snap and pep, as choral pieces with orchestra. The words are rousing (even slightly propagandistic, depending on how you take them) and so are the performances. These sides feature the voice of Glenn Darwin.

The remaining side, presenting Mark Warnow's original piece *Hail America*, is also a stirring march in the same vein as the Sousa arrangements and equally well presented.

It's the Talk of the Town and *Stuffy*; Capitol 15254. *Riftide* and *What Is There To Say*; Capitol 15335. Coleman Hawkins' Orchestra.

● By present day standards, this is old fashioned stuff. But solid and satisfying in a way neither bebop nor progressive jazz can be. *Stuffy* is a splendid jum number featuring a series of marvelous solos. *Riftide* is equally good in faster tempo. Both the other two are slow and rhapsodic, listing heavily on the sentimental side.

Hawkins on tenor and McGhee on trumpet shine on the two solid sides. "Sir Charles" Thompson, on piano, Oscar Pettiford on bass, Allan Reuss, guitar, and Denzil Best, drums, put in more than their two-bits on all four sides. This is good jazz.

H. D. Blues and S. H. Blues; Duke Henderson, with Lucky Thompson and His All Stars. Apollo 400.

Hickory Dickory Dock and Soothe Me; Ernie Andrews with The Eddie Beal Fourtette, and Lucky Thompson. Columbia 37975.

●Even if he has now taken to championing bebop, Lucky hasn't forgotten how to play down-to-earth jazz when the occasion calls for it. The two blues are low-down, genuine stuff, with some good blues shoutin' — and better backing, including Lucky Thompson.

There's no bop in the Columbia, nor not much of anything else, in spite of Lucky Thompson's presence. The only bright spot is a brief piano solo on the *Soothe Me* side.

My Dream Is Yours and Wind In My Sails; Claude Thornhill and Orchestra. Vocal by The Snowflakes and Art Brown. Victor 20-3337.

●For his first disc for Victor, Claude Thornhill has picked two dreamy numbers, well suited to exploit his famed style and nimble-fingered rhapsodizing on piano. Maybe not great music but very pleasant.

Out In the Cold Again and Gypsy Love Song; Sam Donahue and His Orchestra. Vocal by Bill Lockwood. Capitol 15340.

●The first is wishy-washy and hardly worth a listen. But the reverse — all instrumental — is a swell jazz improvisation on a tune no one would have dreamed could be so effective. It has excellent bounce and a swell string of solos.

It must be heard to be believed.

Brush Those Tears From Your Eyes and The Man On the Carousel; Ike Carpenter and His Orchestra. Victor 20-3325.

●A new name and a pleasant surprise. *Brush Those Tears* turns out to be a boogie, with a Western tinge, and some good piano work. Johnny April and a chorus supply the vocal. The reverse is a merry-go-round waltz tune with effects, including the calliope played by Ike Carpenter himself.

You Can Never Shake Love and You Know What the Trouble Is, Baby; Victor 20-3236. *Down By the Station and How Many Tears Must Fall*; Victor 20-3317. Tommy Dorsey and His Orchestra. Vocals by Denny Dennis, Lucy Ann Polk. The Sentimentalists, and The Town Criers.

●A well varied selection from T.D., this time. The first is a slowish, sentimental number with some good trombone passages for a change, and the reverse is a blues, surprisingly well sung by Lucy Ann Polk, with excellent support. *Down By the Station* is a comic number, with sound effects to appeal to children. It has the characteristics of a round like *Frere Jacques*. *How Many Tears* is a slow, sentimental Isham Jones number right up Tommy Dorsey's alley. The band plays it at a whisper and T.D. contributes a lush solo such as he hasn't done for a long time. It is doubtful that any of these sides will make jazz history, but they make very satisfying listening at this time.

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